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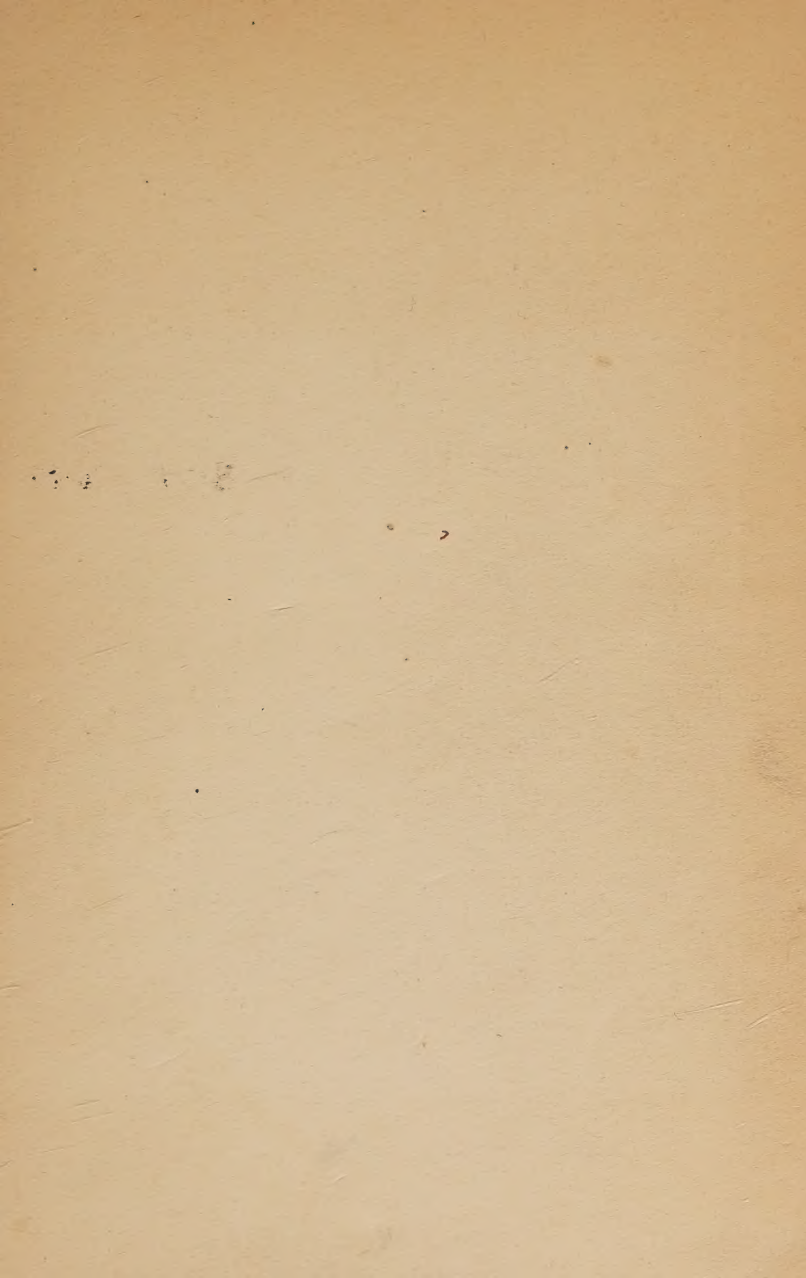
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THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL



THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

IN HISTORY AND CRITICISM

BY

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1923

MADE IN ENGLAND

PREFACE

SOME small portions of Chapters IV and VI appeared in abbreviated form in the *London Quarterly Review* for July, 1922, and the author's cordial thanks are due to the editor and proprietors for their courteous permission to republish them.

In a volume of this character difficult decisions have to be made as to the arrangement of the material and the amount of quotation from the Bible. It has been thought best on the whole to study conciseness of presentation in order that the book might be produced at a price which should make it available to students of moderate means. As a result, the reader will often have to turn to his Bible to peruse the passages discussed, but the balance of convenience appeared to favour this course rather than the wholesale transcription of long chapters of the prophetic writings.

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THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

CHAPTER I

Introductory

THE investigator who approaches the modern study of the prophets is puzzled at first to know where to begin. The details are so numerous and complex, the various topics are so intertwined, the diversities of opinion are so startling and varied that it cannot be said that there is any natural line of approach to an enquiry into the subject. Questions of history, of origin, of date, of internal structure, of composition, of exegesis and of textual criticism are often inseparably intermingled, but dominating them all and determining the attitude of most contemporary writers are certain principles of a dogmatic character which over-ride all considerations of a purely scholarly order.

The first step therefore must be to examine these principles. Baldly stated they are as follows : (1) there is no supernatural element in the prophets¹ : (2) the prophets did not predict except to such extent as would be possible for shrewd and well-informed persons possessing no exceptional divine guidance : (3) the prophet always addresses himself principally to the circumstances of his own time. These three principles are not in all cases held together.

¹ Cp. A. Kuenen, *The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel*, Eng. Trans. 1877, p. 585 : "So long as we derive a separate part of Israel's religious life directly from God, and allow the supernatural or immediate revelation to intervene in even one single point, so long also our view of the whole continues to be incorrect, and we see ourselves here and there necessitated to do violence to the well-authenticated contents of the historical documents. It is the supposition of a natural development alone which accounts for all the phenomena."

Kuenen and his school of course accept the first principle to its fullest extent and the second principle is only the first stated in another way. On the other hand there are writers who while rejecting the rationalist position yet lay great stress on the third principle. Thus Driver writes : "The prophet speaks always, in the first instance, to his own contemporaries : the message which he brings is intimately related with the circumstances of his time : his promises and predictions, however far they reach into the future, nevertheless rest upon the basis of the history of his own age, and correspond to the needs which are then felt." ¹

Yet even for considering the work of those critics who reject the rationalist standpoint a consideration of the first principle is of importance, for much of what they put forward is in reality borrowed from writers who are entirely dominated by it and owe their theories to its inspiration. It is obvious that if in a book attributed to a pre-exilic prophet we find a prediction of the return from the exile our judgment of its genuineness will necessarily be influenced and may even be determined by the view we take of the soundness of these principles. As many of the texts that relate to one apply equally to the others it will conduce to brevity to consider the three principles together.

Any reader of the prophets must see at a glance that their writings taken at face value profess to contain a supernatural element and to embrace prophecies that relate to the future, often to the remote future. This the critics counter in various ways. I do not admit the legitimacy of their procedure or the cogency of their reasoning, but in order to produce a convincing argument it is necessary to have recourse to facts that are not in dispute and cannot be disputed.

In Ezekiel xii. 26-28 we read the following : " Again the word of the Lord came to me saying, Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of times that are afar off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God : There shall none of My words be deferred any

¹ S. R. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 9th Edition [1913], p. 237.

more, but the word which I shall speak shall be performed, saith the Lord God."

Here then we have it charged against the prophet that he has been doing the very thing that according to the third principle no prophet did. Far from bringing a message "intimately related with the circumstances of his time" "corresponding to the needs which were then felt" he had been seeing visions for many days to come and prophesying of times that were far off, and his contemporaries considered that his predictions were out of relation with their circumstances and did not correspond to the needs they felt. He had done this at sufficient length, or with sufficient frequency to give rise to complaints which are regarded as justifiable enough to warrant a promise of a change. This passage cannot be countered by denying its authenticity, for the argument is entirely independent of Ezekiel's personality or date. Call the prophet X, assign the passage to any date you will, and you are equally confronted with the fact that here is a prophet who had been violating the canon of the critics in the most wholehearted manner. Of course it may be suggested that in this he was an isolated instance. That is a question of fact to be determined by other passages: but that we have at least one instance is undeniable.

An examination of the book of Ezekiel certainly shows that we have prophecies that fall within the complaints made by the people. We may first glance at one that affords some further evidence. In chapter xxxviii. we find a denunciation of "Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal." In verse 8 we read "After many days thou shalt be visited; in the latter years thou shalt come into the land." From verse 14 it appears that a time is contemplated "when My people Israel dwelleth securely." When we remember the situation of the people in exile, we can well understand the complaint they make of the prophet's activities. The chapter, however, is important for our present purpose mainly because of the testimony of verse 17: "Thus saith the Lord God: Art thou (*v. l.* Thou art) he of whom I spake in old time by My servants the prophets of Israel

which prophesied in those days for years ¹ that I would bring thee against them?" Whatever view we may take of the meaning of the prophecy, it is quite clear that it has nothing to do with the circumstances of Ezekiel's age. This verse, however, shows us that more than one of his predecessors was known by him to have referred to the matter at a period which he could call "in old time." *A fortiori* therefore these prophets had devoted attention to times that were far off and had no connection with the circumstances of the age in which they themselves lived.

Again Ezekiel xii. 26-28 is immediately preceded by a passage (verses 21-25) which deals with the complaint that "the days are prolonged and every vision faileth." This is met by the promise that "the word that I shall speak shall be performed; it shall be no more deferred." That is a recognition that in the past predictions dealing with a future that was remote had been frequent, and that that future had not yet been converted into the present.

In Ezekiel xx. 23 the prophet makes the following statement: "Moreover I lifted up Mine hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the nations, and disperse them through the countries." That is as clear and definite as it can be, and, if accepted, it disposes of all the three principles. Some six centuries previously at a time when the people had not yet conquered the promised land and the Assyrian policy of deportation had not been devised the earliest of the writing prophets, Moses, had foretold the exile and diaspora. That was prediction with a vengeance. It was so remote and improbable that it could only be due to a supernatural element; and the connection with the circumstances of the Mosaic age was of the slightest. Some connection of course there was. The present always influences the future, and the purpose of Moses to warn his own and all subsequent generations against apostasy was clear enough—so clear indeed that it may be thought to render this a less effective instance than the last against the third canon of the critics. Nevertheless it cannot fairly be

¹ The text here is uncertain.

said that the message was primarily addressed to his own contemporaries.

In this connection it must be remembered that the higher criticism of the Pentateuch has broken down.¹

The mention of Moses recalls the fact that even before his date there was one who prophesied events that still lay many centuries ahead.

As I have shown elsewhere² the blessing of Jacob is the work of the patriarch and foretells what was to occur centuries later. Here again all three principles are refuted. The predictions were so startling and improbable that they can only be referred to a supernatural element, while the connection between the actions of Reuben, Simeon and Levi to which reference is made and the fates predicted for their tribes is of the slightest conceivable.

In Isaiah xv.-xvi. we find an oracle entitled the burden of Moab. It contains an epilogue (xvi. 13 f.) in which what precedes is characterised as "the word that the Lord spake concerning Moab in time past," and we are told that within three years Moab will meet with misfortune. Is it not clear that the author of the earlier portion of the oracle was referring to remote times?

It will perhaps be sufficient to deal more rapidly with a number of other passages that contradict the three principles, as the reader is now familiar with the manner in which they can be tested by the prophetic utterances. Amos iii. 7 expressly says, "surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." It is therefore not strange to find many predictions attributed to him. In Isaiah ii. 2 ff., Micah iv. 1 ff. we have a prophecy of eternal peace which is expressly said to refer to "the latter days." Whatsoever the date that be assigned to this, it cannot be said that it has any great connection with the circumstances of the prophet's time, and the same remark applies to some other predictions of the latter days whatever the language used, and to many of the happenings "in that day." Zechariah throws a clear light on the character of prophetic activity (i. 2-6). According to him the former prophets had delivered themselves of warnings and predictions.

¹ See p. 149 note.

² *Bibliotheca Sacra*, October, 1920.

The warnings had been neglected and it was common knowledge that in consequence the predictions had been fulfilled "But My words and My statutes which I commanded My servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers? and they turned and said Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath He dealt with us." Some predictions are so generally admitted that it will perhaps be sufficient to cite Driver's testimony: "Jeremiah and Ezekiel, for instance, predict first the exile, then the restoration; both are contemplated by them as still future."¹ (See e.g. Jer. xxiv.) I will only draw attention to one of these prophecies that appears to be indubitable. Can anybody read Jeremiah xxxii. with an impartial mind and doubt that before the exile the prophet did in fact predict both the captivity and the return?

In Isaiah xli.-xlviii. we find repeated appeals to the fact that the earlier prophecies had been fulfilled. These are not made in any casual or half-hearted way. They are put forward as matters that are notorious and indisputable from the point of view not merely of the prophet himself but equally of his public, and they are represented as being unquestionably of such a nature as to necessitate the intervention of a supreme God: "I am the Lord; that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another neither My praise unto graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them" (xlii. 8 f., cp. xli. 21-24, xliii. 9, 12, xlv. 7 f., xlv. 21). "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things that are not yet done" (xlv. 10), and especially xlviii. 3-5: "I have declared the former things from of old; yea, they went forth out of My mouth, and I shewed them: suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass: therefore I have declared it to thee from of old: before it came to pass I shewed it to thee: lest thou shouldest say Mine idol hath done them and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them."

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 237.

These testimonies could be multiplied, but surely there is no need. What has been cited is sufficient to prove up to the hilt that from the earliest days of Israel to the close of the prophetic period men appeared from time to time who uttered predictions, many of which related primarily or wholly to ages that were yet distant. Their messages frequently stood in little or no relation to the needs and circumstances of their own times. When they were tested by history it was found that as a matter of fact there was such a correspondence between their predictions and actual events that their claim to have received supernatural communications was established beyond question.

In considering this matter it is important to bear in mind the test that was applied to prophets, Deuteronomy xviii. 21 f: "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken. When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken." The principle on which the Jews acted in deciding whether or not the prophet had in fact spoken in God's name is here laid down with the utmost clearness. Consequently when we find that certain works have been held by those who were in a position to know the facts far better than any modern to have complied with the test, the presumption arises that the decision was right. This consideration becomes important in certain cases where a prophecy may (so far as we know) be applied to two different more or less contemporary phenomena, one of which entirely fulfils the prediction while the other does not. In such case the finding of any tribunal that had been trained to weigh evidence would be that the prediction was understood to refer to the phenomenon which fulfilled it.

Were it necessary it would be easy to supplement the evidence of the prophets in other ways. Professor Orr has told us of the effect produced on his mind by the attempts of Wellhausen and others to exclude the supernatural from Israel's history. The result was a series of extraordinary coincidences which were much more difficult to credit than divine intervention.¹

¹ *The Problem of the Old Testament* [1906], pp. 455 ff.

As it is plain that the prophets in fact claim supernatural aid in their work, the rationalists at one time felt it incumbent on them to rebut this claim. This function was fulfilled by A. Kuenen's *De Profeten en de Profetien onder Israel*, which appeared in 1875. An English translation, under the title *The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel*, was published in 1877. This work is still the foundation of substantially all that is written to the disparagement of the predictive power of the prophets: and while many of its weaker positions have been tacitly abandoned, no reply has hitherto been made to it. As a result its conclusions have passed into modern thought and have been taught as commonplaces to thousands who have no conception of their original source. Accordingly this is the work with which it is necessary to deal, and I have throughout paid regard to its contentions. At the same time the answer to it that is in place to-day is different from what would have been required soon after its appearance, for much that was unknown to Kuenen or overlooked by him has since become axiomatic. Hence it would not be of much interest to follow his arrangement step by step, showing at each point exactly where his mistakes lie. Most people will be able to see that readily enough for themselves if they are interested, once they have the true facts before them. And in setting out those facts the topical arrangement is not always the best in the light of our present knowledge. Hence a different method has been adopted in part. The history is reconstructed, and, wherever convenient, the prophecies are fitted into their appropriate positions so that the reader can judge at once of the circumstances of their delivery and their fulfilment. Where this method appears less suitable recourse is had either to Kuenen's topical arrangement or to discussions of separate prophets and sections. It is hoped that overlapping has been reduced to a minimum, and that the employment of the three different methods is justified by considerations of convenience. Anybody who wishes to compare for himself the respective cases for rationalism and supernaturalism should begin by reading this book, so as to get a general notion of the history. He could then read the four chapters of Kuenen's *Prophets*

(v. to viii.), in which the author contends that essential predictions were unfulfilled, and with the help of the indices to this book it will be possible to find the replies point by point. This will be the easiest plan because unfortunately there are no indices to Kuenen's volume.

Side by side with the questions of the meaning and supernatural character of the prophecies are critical problems, many of them inextricably involved with the others. In many cases it has been possible to solve these at the same time. Often the indication of the historical circumstances in which an oracle was delivered is all that is needed to establish its authorship. There are other instances where the critical question looms larger and such fuller discussion as seemed necessary will then be found in appropriate places. But it is right that at the outset some general observations should be made.

While there are cases in which critical questions of real substance present themselves, there is an enormous amount of literature that rests on nothing more substantial than the purely subjective impressions of its authors. "The authenticity of every verse in chapters ii. and iii., and of several verses in chapter i., has been questioned by one or more scholars." It is in these words that a member of the critical school describes the critical position as to Zephaniah.¹ After reading a quantity of modern literature on the prophets I have reached the conclusion that much of it is best left unnoticed because it will convince nobody except its authors. Thus it seems to be quite unnecessary to publish an examination of each verse of Zephaniah in the light of the subjective impressions of various commentators. All that is required is to deal with the substantial difficulties and to see how far history elucidates the book.

There is, however, another aspect of many of the critical contentions which has entirely escaped notice. It is one thing to postulate one or two great prophets whose work is through some accident of transmission anonymous: it is quite another to suggest that there were an infinite number of supplementers and editors living at different

¹ Prof. F. C. Eiselen in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, p. 3145.

periods, all of whom are shown by the history to have been prophets of truth, all able to write a style indistinguishable from that of the particular prophet supplemented, all limiting their activity to a few words or clauses or perhaps an occasional prophecy. Let us just take a few illustrations.

Micah iv. 10 reads as follows : " Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail : for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and shalt dwell in the field, and shalt come even unto Babylon ; there shalt thou be rescued ; there shall the Lord redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies." As it stands that is an absolutely accurate prediction of two events—the exile and the return. If now it be denied to Micah, we must postulate another writer who composed in the same style and was able to foretell the future with certainty and success. We shall then have substituted two prophets of truth for one, albeit without a particle of evidence. At one time rationalist criticism attempted to evade the difficulty by striking out the clause as to Babylon. For this there was no shadow of reason. It was simply done in order to bolster up the idea that the prophets could not predict : and its baselessness is now conceded even by advanced critics.

Obadiah, the smallest of the prophetic books, is so short that any suggestion of dividing it might be expected to be excluded. Nevertheless, efforts have been made to tear it in pieces. A recent commentator has written as follows :—

" If the list in verses 19, 20 were a description of territory which Judah had already taken, it would be different. The passage would then belong to the time of Alexander Jannæus (103–76 B.C.), where Eichhorn actually placed it. For then all this was practically realised. Edom had been definitely conquered by John Hyrcanus, Galilee by Aristobulus I, Philistia, Moab and Gilead by Alexander Jannæus. But if there were no other reasons, the simple fact that verses 19, 20 are an expression of hope and not a description of fact excludes this." ¹

Eichhorn's attitude is intelligible, for it is the only one that is consistent with rationalism, but the facts of the

¹ J. A. Bewer, *Obadiah and Joel* [1912], p. 9.

text are fatal to it. It then appears that these verses are the work of a prophet of truth who enjoyed a degree of supernatural foreknowledge. If we assign the predictions as to Edom, which were also fulfilled, to a different author, the result is to leave us with two true prophets instead of one. The grounds on which it is sought to divide the book are too flimsy to need consideration. But attention is drawn to the extraordinary result of the criticism in the multiplication of prophets.

Or take the prediction of the same events in Isaiah xi. 14. If this be denied to Isaiah of Jerusalem and assigned to an exilic writer, what is the result? Simply this. Instead of holding that Isaiah foretold these events some six centuries before they happened, we must assume that there was another prophet otherwise unknown who was his equal in superhuman foresight and wrote a style that was indistinguishable from his, but lived about a century and a half later, and only produced a very small amount of work which either by accident or through fraud has been attributed to Isaiah. From the point of view of the question whether the work is within ordinary human powers or requires the introduction of some theory of divine revelation to explain it, there is no practical difference between *circa* 700 and *circa* 550 B.C. It is as impossible for an ordinary man who enjoys no supernatural aid to foretell events four centuries as six centuries before they occur. And to this must be added the fact that the passage is not of any ordinary literary quality. It is literature of the very highest order in the style of Isaiah of Jerusalem and of no other prophet. How can we suppose that some unknown editor or supplementer could be able to produce work of this kind some 150 years after the master's death?

The fact is that none of these hypotheses would ever have seen the light but for the effort of rationalism to destroy the belief in revelation. They all rest on the rationalist canons which have been considered above, and they have no higher value or authority. Since nothing else can be adduced to accredit these views, detailed consideration of them becomes unnecessary.

CHAPTER II

The Main Course of History and Prophecy to the Death of Sargon

IN the year 765 B.C., when Jeroboam II was reigning over the kingdom of Israel and Uzziah over Judah, Amos of Tekoa opened the line of prophets who are represented by writings that are still extant. In order to appreciate their activity and the line of their thought we must glance at the earlier history.

Four main factors are to be found moulding the fortunes of the Hebrews in every age, i.e. centrifugalism and separatism, the special religious position and external pressure. For many centuries, from the time of Abraham to that of Solomon, the chief political interest of the history is centred in the play of these forces. The statesmanship of Moses and David, combined with conditions that were at times favourable, came within a little of welding the twelve tribes into a permanent national unit. Finally, however, after the death of Solomon, centrifugalism triumphed in the great disruption which led to the formation of the Northern Kingdom by the side of the Davidic monarchy which continued in the south. The present Hebrew of the books of Kings makes it appear that a prophet was largely responsible for this result ; but a version of the story which is in many respects older and more trustworthy has been preserved in some Greek authorities, and this exonerates the prophet from any guilty complicity. There is no reason to think that the best Hebrew minds of any age differed from the view which, as we shall shortly see, was taken by Hosea.¹

¹ A detailed examination of the forces operating from Abraham to the schism, with a full discussion of the narratives of the latter

The kingdom of David depended for its unity in part on the religious institutions. Their binding force operated in various ways to weld the tribes of Israel into a single whole. Jeroboam I, therefore, to strengthen his monarchy and diminish the risk of a reunion, struck at the bonds which drew them together. A non-Levitical priesthood was instituted. By virtue of its origin and its illegitimacy it was necessarily devoted to the cause of the northern monarchy. A festival falling one month later was instituted to replace the old feast of booths. Centres of pilgrimage with bulls for worship were established in Bethel and Dan as substitutes for the temple of Jerusalem with its imageless worship. The northern throne rested on taurolatry, but this result was in reality due to the inexorable pressure of facts. To have left the religion unchanged would have meant an earlier or later reunion under the house of David. If Jeroboam made Israel to sin and his successors followed in his path, it was by reason of political necessity rather than from any other motive.

The editor of the books of Kings accepts the schism as inevitable and seeks to draw from it such religious lessons as he can. The view of the prophets was fundamentally different. Whether as patriots or as true servants of God they found the existence of the separate northern kingdom a perpetual stumbling-block. As patriots they naturally desired to see the unity of Israel re-established on a basis which should exclude internal jealousies and antagonisms. As servants of the living God they vehemently rejected the idolatrous cult of Northern Israel, together with the institution which had created and depended upon it. The early prophets give emphatic utterance to these thoughts. "Israel hath cast off that which is good; the enemy shall pursue him. They have set up kings, but not by Me; they have made princes, and I knew it not; of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off. He hath cast off thy calf, O Samaria; Mine anger is kindled against them:

event, will be found in a study entitled "Some Factors in Early Hebrew History" which appeared in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April and October, 1921. It must suffice here to refer to this in justification of the statements in the text.

how long will it be ere they attain to innocency? For from Israel is even this; the workman made it, and it is no God: yea, the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces" (Hosea viii. 3-6). "Where now is thy king, that he may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I have given thee a king in My anger, and have taken him away in My wrath" (Hosea xiii. 10 f.).¹

The teaching of the prophets does not however stop at mere denunciations. They predict disasters of the most definite character. It is true that their oracles are qualified by the view that efficient repentance might avail to induce God to turn away the evil. "Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (Amos v. 15, cp. Hosea xiv. etc.). In that sense their predictions are conditional. But the condition which might have availed to secure protection was never fulfilled, and for our present purpose we have merely to point to the way in which what they foretold came to pass. They held that the spiritual and moral condition of the nation and the monarchy alike could only be cured by the most drastic means. Foreseeing the overwhelming of the Syrian states by the Assyrian flood, they foretold that it would prove fatal to the separate existence of Northern Israel, terminating the monarchy and driving the nation into exile. For Judah and the other states the consequences would be severe. As the ultimate result of these measures there would be a reunion of Israel and Judah under the house of David, but the prophets foresaw and predicted two separate events with which we shall have to deal in due course.² In addition they foretold the violent end of the house of Jehu (Amos vii. 9, 11; Hosea i. 4).

Writing two years before the earthquake (Amos i. 1) Amos foretells it (viii. 8), as also an eclipse of the sun which occurred on June 15, 763 B.C. "Shall not the

¹ Compare further Hosea *passim* and the denunciations of idolatry in Amos iv. 4, etc.

² See pp. 59 ff., 97 ff.

land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? yea, it shall rise up wholly like a river, and it shall be troubled and sink again, like the river of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos viii. 8 f.). There seems no reason to doubt that these were genuine predictions and they are the foundation of the view that the prophet's activity fell in the year 765 B.C. We have now to trace the subsequent history as far as material.¹

According to 2 Kings xiv. 29, xv. 8-14, Jeroboam II (785-745 B.C.) was succeeded by his son Zechariah, who reigned six months and was then murdered by Shallum, who in turn was killed by Menahem one month later. A contemporary, however, tells us that at this time three kings perished by violence in a single month.² It appears therefore that in this as in other cases the chronology of Kings has reckoned co-regencies as successive reigns. In truth Zechariah was associated with his father during the last few months of the latter's reign and both monarchs were killed by Shallum (cp. Amos vii. 9, 11, Hosea i. 4). In the same year Tiglath-pileser III or IV (745-727 B.C.) the Pulu of the Babylonians and the Pul of the Bible, mounted the throne of Assyria, and with him began a fresh era of Assyrian expansion and the new policy of deportations from conquered states.

It was not long before the Syrian states felt the effects of this vigorous monarch's elevation. He invaded Israel, but Menahem bought him off with 1,000 talents of silver (2 Kings xv. 19 f.). From the Assyrian king's annals³

¹ For the chronology of what follows see Appendix I.

² Zech. xi. 8. This was written before Pekah's accession (see pp. 112 f.) and is therefore an incomparably better authority for the period than the books of Kings.

³ The following extracts from Tiglath-pileser's inscription are worth quoting not only for their reference to this but also for their bearing on Zech. ix. ff. (126) . . . the cities Usnu, Siannu, Si[mirra], Rashpuna(?) on the sea-coast, together with the cities as far as the mountain of Saue, (127) a mountain which reaches (?) to the Lebanon, and Mount Ba'lisapuna as far as Mount Ammana [Antilebanon], the mountain of the Urkarinu wood, and Sau in its entirety, the district of the city of Kâr-Hadad, (128) the city of Khatarikka [Hadrach] in the district of the city of Nuqudina, . . . (130) . . .

we know that he received tribute from Menahem in 738 B.C.

It was probably at about this time that Uzziah of Judah died. The date is of no political importance, for the king had been a leper for years and no longer exercised any royal functions, but Isaiah's inaugural vision is dated by his death (Isa. vi. 1). It contains a terrible account of the future. "Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste, and the Lord have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. And if there be yet a tenth in it, it shall again be eaten up: as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof" (Isa. vi. 11-13).

Up to this time the two Hebrew kingdoms had often faced war and sustained disasters, but there had been no irreparable catastrophe of the first magnitude. Moreover, there had been peace between them during the long reign of Uzziah, i.e. for more than half a century. This state of affairs was now to terminate. In the vivid imagery of a contemporary prophet, "And I took my staff Pleasantness and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples. . . . Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel" (Zech. xi. 10, 14). In other words a series of wars began which led to one calamity after another. First there was war between Israel and other peoples,

nineteen districts, (131) of Hamath, together with the cities of its environs on the coast of the western sea, which they in sin and evil or Azariah had taken, (132) I added to the territory of Assyria. My officers I set over them as governors, 30,300 men [I deported (133) . . . from] their cities, and in the district of Ku . . . settled them . . . 1,223 people I settled in the district of Ulluba. (150) The tribute of Kushtashpi of Kummukh, Reson of Damascus, Menahem of Samaria, (151) Hiram of Tyre, Sibittibi'li of Gebal (Byblus), Urikki of Que, Pisiris of Carchemish, Eni-el (152) of Hamath (then follow other names and a description of the tribute) (157) I received. [Annals of Tiglath-pileser IV, R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament* [1912], 315 f.]

then a civil war between the two Hebrew kingdoms.

In a great poem some of which is probably narrative, not prediction,¹ Isaiah has described the successive events, regarding them as manifestations of God's wrath with His people. And of each in turn he writes, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." This prophecy begins in Isaiah ix. 7 (8). Its conclusion has become detached from the main portion, and what remains of it is to be found in v. 25 ff. After the payment of Menahem's tribute the Israelites hoped for a period of recuperation. "The bricks are fallen, but we will build with hewn stone: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars" (Isa. ix. 9 (10)). But war broke out. Syria on the east and the Philistines on the west attacked Israel, overran its territory and appear to have inflicted a defeat which cut off "head and tail, palm-branch and rush" in one day (13 (14)). The casualties were evidently very heavy (16 (17)). This led to internal commotion and Pekah the "foolish shepherd" of Zechariah xi. 15 murdered Pekahiah who had succeeded Menahem on the throne.

"With him were fifty men of the Gileadites" (2 Kings xv. 25). It is to this that Isaiah refers in ix. 19 f. (20 f.) when speaking of the civil war he says, "they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm; Manasseh, Ephraim and Ephraim, Manasseh."² There is, however, worse to follow, for the prophet adds "and they together shall be against Judah." Pekah who was pro-Syrian made peace with the invaders on the basis of a joint league to despoil Judah. Syria under Rezin, Israel and the Philistines were parties to it. The Chronicler who nar-

¹ We have seen (above pp. 14 f.) that those who were in a position to know best accepted the oracles as inspired after applying the test of fulfilment. It follows as a corollary that all oracles that related to the immediate future were substantially fulfilled. Hence even if these verses are prediction they may properly be used as a historical source.

² The language here is due to the fact that half Manasseh was settled in trans-Jordania. In view of the fact that Ephraim and Manasseh were brothers, the name is selected for all trans-Jordania in order to reinforce the horror of the conception of civil war. Strictly speaking Gilead belonged to Gad.

rates the participation of the latter (2 Chron. xxviii. 18), about which the books of Kings are silent, is supported by the Assyrian record.¹ He also states that the Edomites had attacked too (ver. 17). Thus began the Syro-Ephraimite war which brought the Syrian states to ruin. Judah lost Elath and only bought safety by becoming the vassal of Assyria (2 Kings xvi. 7 f.). Damascus became an Assyrian province and had to endure devastation and the deportation of its people (2 Kings xvi. 9). The north and east of Israel were also annexed to the Assyrian Empire and the first deportation occurred. Pekah was deposed and slain by Hoshea who succeeded him (xv. 29 f.).² Together with the second deportation in 721 B.C. these events form the theme of the prophetic summary of Zechariah xiii. 7 f.: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in

¹ That an old source underlies the account of Chronicles is also obvious from verse 23, where we read that Ahaz "sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus which smote him." A monotheistic *midrash* could not have suggested that the Damascene idols could smite. It would have regarded them as no-gods.

² The inscriptions relating to these events are as follows: (6) The city of Gal'a the city of Abilakka, which at the entrance of Bit-Khumria [Israel] (7) . . . the broad [Naphta] in its entirety I added to Assyria. (8) My officials as governors I set over them. (15) . . . I received. . . . Bit Khumria (16) . . . the entirety of its people (17) their goods to Assyria I carried away. As Pekah, their king, they had deposed, Hosea (18) I established as king over them. (Tiglat-phileser's small inscription 1, Rogers' *Cuneiform Parallels*, 320 f.) (227) [Bit-Khumria] all of whose cities, on my former campaigns I had added [to my territory] (228) . . . into captivity had carried, [and], had left for him Samaria alone, *Pekah* their king [they had cast away] (229) like a stormwind. . . . (230) . . . a district of Bit-[Khumria]? (231) prisoners of . . . city of -bara, 625 prisoners of the city (232) . . . prisoners of Khinaton, 650 prisoners of Qana (?) (233) 400 prisoners of . . . at-bi-te, 650 prisoners of Ir (?) . . . (234) . . . the people with their herds I carried away . . . the cities of Aruma, Marum. . . . (Annals 227-234, *op. cit.* 319). In a list of tribute we find (60) . . . Sanipu of Bit-Ammân [i.e. Ammon], Salamanu of Moab, (61) Metinti of Ashkelon, Jehoahaz [i.e. Ahaz] of Judah, Kaushmalaka of Edom, Mus [. . .], (62) Hanno of Gaza. (Nimroud Tablet, Rogers, *op. cit.* p. 322).

all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die ; but the third shall be left therein." Isaiah had foretold Assyria's intervention. " And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss for them from the end of the earth : and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly : none shall be weary nor stumble among them ; none shall slumber nor sleep ; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken ; whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent ; their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flints, and their wheels like a whirlwind : their roaring shall be like a lion, they shall roar like young lions : yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and carry it away safe, and there shall be none to deliver. And they shall roar against them in that day like the roaring of the sea : and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and distress, and the light is darkened in the clouds thereof " (Isa. v. 26-30).

Nor did Philistia escape. Tiglath-pileser dealt severely with its cities.¹

The beginning of the Syro-Ephraimite war fell in the reign of Jotham (2 Kings xv. 37), but before it had reached its crisis Ahaz was the sole occupant of the throne of Judah, and he it was who sent to the Assyrian king for help.

Among Isaiah's earlier writings must be mentioned chapters i. and ii. 6 ff. The Syro-Ephraimite war was the occasion of the first chapter, as will be seen from the following passages. " Your country is desolate ; your cities are burned with fire ; your land, strangers devour

¹ (235 . . . Mitinti of Ashkelon had sinned against my oath, and from me (236) had fallen away. He saw the defeat of Reson [i.e. Rezin], [and] fell into terror (?). . . . (237) Rukibtu, the son of Mitinti seated himself on his throne. In order (238) to save his life he came before me, and besought me . . . 500 . . . (239) . . . and, into his city I entered, 15 cities [of its environs, (240) I took from his land and] gave them to Idi-bi'il of Arubu (*op. cit.* pp. 319 f.). Tiglath-pileser after narrating that he had added the broad Naphtali in its entirety to Assyria continues thus :—(8) Hanno of Gaza (9) fled before my arms and escaped to Egypt : the city of Gaza (10) I captured, his goods, his possessions, his gods I carried away . . . my royal portrait (11) . . . I set up in the palace of Hanno and . . . added to the gods of their land. . . . (12) [Tribute and taxes] I laid upon them. . . . (Rogers, *op. cit.* 321.)

it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (i. 7-9). "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and will take away all thy tin" (25). It precedes Hezekiah's reformation (cp. 29 ff.). This observation applies still more forcibly to ii. 7 f. 20, while the threat to the cedars of Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan in 13 anticipates Tiglath-pileser's annexation.

It is to this period that Isaiah vii. 1-viii., xvii. 1-11 must be referred.¹

¹ Great difficulty has been imported into Isaiah vii. by an accident of the textual transmission. We are concerned with Isaiah and Ahaz in 1-16, but then follows a prophecy of which the introduction is missing, addressed not to Ahaz but to Hezekiah (vers. 17-20). The reasons for this view are as follows: (1) While the earlier passage is devoted to reassuring Ahaz, the latter is a threat of the worst misfortune that had befallen since the schism; (2) The King of Assyria is here depicted as an enemy (ver. 17), but in 734 B.C. he was a friend and ally, and he did not come against Judah; (3) The oracle implies that at the time of its delivery there was a great power in Egypt (ver. 18). This was not true in 734 B.C. when Ethiopia had not yet established its rule over Egypt. It will be seen hereafter (pp. 50 f.) that the whole oracle was literally fulfilled in 701 B.C. Apparently verses 23-5 are the continuation of 17-20, and 21 f. should follow verse 16.

Kuenen regards Isaiah vii. 14 ff. as "unfulfilled." It promises that the land of Syria and Ephraim shall be "forsaken" before a child, as yet unborn, "knoweth to refuse the evil and choose the good," for which he allows about 4 years. On Isaiah vii. 16 Gray writes: "The Assyrians will first by their advance recall the Syrians and Ephraimites to their own territory, and then after defeating them devastate their country. Isaiah expected the subjection of Ephraim and Syria to take some little time; and his forecast was substantially justified by events. We may place the interview with Ahaz early in 734. Damascus was reduced in 732. The captivity of Galilee (2 Kings xv. 29) may be placed in 734" (*Isaiah I* [1912], pp. 131 f.).

Reason for holding that the fall of Damascus probably preceded the captivity of Galilee will be found in the first appendix, but whatever the correct dates, the events fall within the period limited, but did they fulfil the oracles? To begin with the case of Damascus. The Annals of Tiglath-pileser IV have suffered very greatly, but enough can be made out to justify the prophet.

In the year 727 B.C. Tiglath-pileser and Ahaz passed away within a few months of each other. The Philistines naturally rejoiced at the death of their oppressor, "the rod that smote thee" of Isaiah xiv. 29, but the prophet warned them of the "smoke out of the north" (i.e. Assyria). Two other Assyrian kings would arise—

(195) . . . his [i.e. Rezon's] warriors I took prisoner . . . cast down with my arms (196) . . . before him (197) the chariot drivers and . . . their arms I broke, (198) their chariots and their horses I took . . . his warriors, who carried bows . . . (199) . . . who carried shields and spears I took prisoner with my hands, their line of battle (200) I broke. He fled alone to save his life and (201) . . . like a mouse (?) entered the gate of his city. His leaders alive (202) I run through with spears and set them up to be looked upon by his land. Forty-five people (?) of the camp (203) . . . I collected about his city and like a bird in a cage I shut him in, his parks (204) . . . his plantations, which were without number, I cut down, and left not one (tree). (205) . . . Khadara, the paternal home of Reson of Damascus (206) . . . (where) he was born, I besieged, I took. 800 people with their goods (207) . . . their cattle, [and] sheep I took away. 750 prisoners of Kurussa, (208) . . . prisoners of Irma, 550 prisoners of Mituna, I took away. 591 cities (209) . . . of 16 districts of Damascus I destroyed like a deluge heap (Rogers, *op. cit.* pp. 317 f.).

Surely this is a complete fulfilment of the prediction.

It is however said that in xvii. i f. Isaiah expresses an anticipation that Damascus would cease to be inhabited. But is that so? "Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city." Does that necessarily mean that it ceases to be inhabited, or is it merely a poetical way of saying that its walls shall be broken down? Hebrew ideas draw a clear distinction between a walled city and an unwalled, and the phrase does not exceed what might be expected of a poet. The text of the next phrase is doubtful. מַעֵי "heap" is not in the Greek and appears to be a dittograph of מַעֵיר "from a city." As to the expression "ruin" the Assyrian claim is ". . . of sixteen districts of Damascus I destroyed like a deluge heap." The following phrase is again textually doubtful, but the plurals make it clear that the prophet is foretelling that the cities of Damascus are to be forsaken and become pasturage. A very probable conjecture gives us "her cities are forsaken for ever" (see Kittel *Biblia Hebraica ad loc.*). "591 cities," says the Assyrian, "I destroyed like a deluge heap." Surely that is definite enough. The kingdom did cease from Damascus (xvii. 3).

It is sought to discredit the prophecies about Ephraim by placing the abandonment in 721. This ignores the important fact that it was the blow struck in 732 that really depopulated Israel and rendered it too weak to be a danger to Ahaz. At the fall of Samaria the number deported was only 27,290 (Sargon's *Annals* and General Inscription, Rogers, *op. cit.* 326, 331) and the city was strong enough

"a basilisk and his fruit a fiery flying serpent." These are still future and therefore cannot refer to Tiglath-pileser's immediate successor Shalmaneser V. In fact the two kings who followed him, Sargon II and his son Sennacherib, inflicted terrible chastisement on the Philistine towns, while Shalmaneser V so far as we know did not attack them.¹ Hence this oracle:—

to revolt in the following year. Contrast with this the unfortunately mutilated statements of Tiglath-pileser's small inscription 6-8 and 15-18 and *Annals* 227-234, quoted above p. 26*n*. When these are compared with the narrative of 2 Kings xv. 29, there can be little doubt that the really serious depopulation occurred in 732. To test Isaiah's predictions we must put ourselves in the position of his contemporaries at the end of 732. Would anybody then have suggested that the predictions had not been literally fulfilled? Reading xvii. 1-11 in the light of the monumental and Hebrew material we see that it is an exact forecast of the position in that year. Then stress is laid on the words "spoil of Samaria" in viii. 4, and it is suggested that because Assyrian troops did not actually enter the capital the prediction was unfulfilled. "Their goods to Assyria I carried away—ten talents of gold . . . talents of silver I received as a present from them" (*op. cit.* p. 321). Would any poet in any language or age hesitate to use the expression "spoil of Samaria" of such facts?

Isaiah, however, did not content himself with foretelling the disasters that were immediately impending. He not only assured Ahaz of the speedy crippling of Samaria, he went further and explained (vii. 8) "that in yet three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken in pieces that it be not a people." The reference appears to be to the action of Osnappar mentioned in Ezra iv. 2, 10. This is obviously a prediction that could only be due to supernatural knowledge and rationalistic criticism is therefore compelled to pronounce this a gloss. That however is an impossible view. A glossator would necessarily have expressed himself in the form of narrative. Such phraseology as "and it came to pass after sixty-five years that Ephraim ceased to be a people" would have been necessary. But this is in the language of prediction "and in yet sixty-five years Ephraim *shall* be broken." That is forecast, not annotation. The genuineness of the clause is further established by the fact that its removal leaves a mutilated oracle which will not support the conclusion "if ye will not believe surely ye shall not be established." To append that to such platitudes as "the head of Syria is Damascus, etc." *without any more vigorous addition* is to make the whole passage ridiculous. It is however quite possible that the oracle contains a lacuna which was originally filled by some similar statement about Syria, but we have no means of ascertaining this.

¹ We find Hanno of Gaza giving trouble in 720 B.C. As he had fought against Tiglath-pileser in 734-2 (see above p. 27*n*), it is improbable that he had been concerned in any rising against Assyria

"In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden. Rejoice not, O Philistia, all of thee, because the rod that smote thee is broken; for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a basilisk, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent. And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and thy remnant shall be slain. Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou art melted away, O Philistia, all of thee; for there cometh a smoke out of the north, and none standeth aloof at his appointed times. What then shall one answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and in her shall the afflicted of His people take refuge" (Isa. xiv. 28-32).

The minute correspondence of the details with the knowledge we have obtained from other sources is exceedingly remarkable. Sargon II—"the basilisk that came out of the serpent's root"—was a usurper who founded a new dynasty. His advent is still future. But his successor was his own son, "his fruit." At the same time Isaiah prophesies that Zion will remain inviolable during the Assyrian troubles and that the God-fearing among the people ("the first-born of the poor," "the needy," "the afflicted of his people") will find refuge in it.

Isaiah's oracle is clearly an answer to the attempt of a Philistine embassy to involve Judah in a rebellion against Assyria. We know in fact that Shalmaneser made two expeditions to Syria.¹ On the second of these he began the five years' blockade of Tyre which his successor raised and the siege of Samaria.

Ahaz was succeeded by Hezekiah whose reign was foretold by more than one prophet. The oracle against Moab contained in Isaiah xv. f. which, as we shall see,² found its fulfilment in 713 B.C. contains the following: "And a throne shall be established in mercy, and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David; judging, and seeking judgement, and swift to do righteousness"

in the intervening period since. Assyrian policy generally inflicted deportation and colonisation on any vassal city that rebelled. On Sargon see below pp. 34 f., 37, and on Sennacherib the Taylor prism quoted on pp. 46 f.

¹ See pp. 34, 67 f.

² See p. 38.

(Isa. xvi. 5). Many incidents of the reign had been foretold in oracles which will be considered in Chapter VII, and are best left to be discussed then. Some of the most striking of the predictions relating to this reign that have come down to us are, however, contained in a passage that may fitly be quoted here. "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and will destroy thy chariots: and I will cut off the cities of thy land, and will throw down all thy strongholds: and I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers: and I will cut off thy graven images and thy pillars out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thine Asherim out of the midst of thee: and I will destroy thy cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the nations which hearkened not" (Micah v. 9-14 (10-15)). This clearly foretells Hezekiah's reformation and Sennacherib's expedition, and not less clearly was written before the beginning of the reign to which it refers.¹

It was at about this time that another great power appeared on the scene and it is therefore necessary to pause and explain the position it occupied. Egypt no longer possessed a strong centralised monarchy. "Under . . . Osorkon III the power of the dominant house rapidly waned until at last there was an independent lord or petty king in every city of the Delta and up the river as far as Hermopolis. We are acquainted with the names of eighteen of these dynasts, whose struggle among themselves now led to the total dissolution of the Egyptian state. The land again resolved itself into those small and local political units of which it had consisted in prehistoric days, before there existed any consolidated and centralised government. . . . When the troops of Tiglath-pileser III devastated the West down to the frontier of Egypt in 734-732 B.C., the kings of the Delta were too involved in their own complicated and petty wars to render the wretched Hebrews any assist-

¹ The question whether what precedes this passage should be grouped with it is considered below, p. 120.

ance ; nor did they foresee that the day must soon come when the great power of the Tigris would cross the desert that separated Egypt from Palestine and absorb the ancient kingdom of the Nile. But before this inevitable catastrophe should occur, another foreign power was to possess the throne of the Pharaohs.”¹

That power was Ethiopia. Under Piankhi, whose capital was at Napata, she extended her suzerainty over all Egypt, but he did not depose the dynasts, and permitted Osorkon to continue to reign as his vassal. After a highly successful campaign he returned to Napata (*circa* 727 B.C.). He styled himself king of Upper and Lower Egypt. It is his commander who figures in 2 Kings xvii. 4 as Seve (So) king of Egypt and in Sargon's inscriptions as Sib'e tartan (commander in chief) of Egypt. The view that he was an otherwise unknown Delta dynast cannot be supported. No foreign monarch would send to the king of a mere city or district for help in resisting the greatest power of the age ; nor can we suppose that any local dynast either had sufficient troops for a war in Syria or could leave his territory denuded and at the mercy of his rivals while they were sent on a foreign campaign. Hoshea's Seve can only have been the authority that controlled the resources of a great power. There was none such in the valley of the Nile except Ethiopia. Either then Seve is described as king of Egypt through the common Hebrew usage, which bestows the title on dignitaries who in modern parlance would be termed viceroys or regents, or he is to be identified with Shabaka, who was closely related to Piankhi (being either his son or his brother and son-in-law) and in fact became king of Egypt in 712 B.C.² The Ethiopians at

¹ J. H. Breasted, *History of Egypt*, 2nd Ed. [1909], p. 536.

² It is objected to this that in Ashurbanipal's annals (Rassam cylinder) II, 22, the name of Shabaku occurs. This makes it improbable that the same person would be called Sibe in Sargon's inscriptions. There is however an interval of more than fifty years between the two periods referred to. The Egyptologists think that the last syllable of Shabaka's name is a suffix, though they disagree as to what suffix it is. Historical probability favours the identification of Seve and Shabaka, but its possibility must be left to philologists to discuss.

any rate were under no illusion as to the necessity of checking Assyria's advance.

The Philistine mission to which Isaiah xiv. 28-32 introduces us provides a good example of the diplomatic activity which prevailed among the little Syrian states till the end of the century. At least six Assyrian expeditions to the West fell within the period and there was incessant plotting and ferment. We have no inscriptions of Shalmaneser V, but we know from a passage of Menander,¹ which is corroborated by a reference in one of Sargon's inscriptions, that the king twice invaded Syrian lands. This agrees with 2 Kings xvii. 3 f. from which we learn of two invasions of Israel by this monarch. The first brought submission and tribute from Hoshea. Subsequently he stopped paying tribute and sent an embassy to Seve or So. This led to the second Assyrian invasion. It is nowhere stated in so many terms that a battle ensued, but the language of 2 Kings xvii. 4 f. certainly suggests that the king of Assyria threw Hoshea into prison before beginning the siege, and as his reign began in 732 B.C. the nine years allotted to him terminate before the beginning of the siege of Samaria. Hoshea would hardly have fallen into Shalmaneser's power except as the result of a lost battle, and when we connect this fact with the embassy to Seve and the revolt of Tyre and other cities, it would appear that the Assyrians captured Hoshea in consequence of a battle in which they defeated the confederates.²

They then sat down to the blockade of Tyre, which they finally raised after several years' siege, and to the siege of Samaria which fell in 721 B.C. By that time Sargon II had replaced Shalmaneser on the Assyrian throne.

In the year 720 B.C. Ilubi'di or Yaubi'di of Hamath revolted against the Assyrians. He induced Arpad, Simirra, Damascus and Samaria to join in the rebellion. Further South Hanno, king of Gaza, and Sibe, tartan of Egypt, both of whom we have met before, were members

¹ Quoted on pp. 67 f.

² Compare Hosea i. 5. "And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."

of the coalition. Sargon defeated Ilubi'di at Qarquar. Of the southern allies we read the following:

(25) Hanno, king of Gaza, had come with Sib'e, the Tartan of Egypt, to Rapikhi against me, to offer battle and slaughter; (26) I accomplished their defeat. Sib'e feared the onset of my arms, fled and was no more found; Hanno, the king of Gaza, I took prisoner. (27) The tribute of Pir'u, the king of Egypt, Samsi, the queen of Arabia, It'amara the Sabaeen, gold, the products (?) of the mountains, horses, camels I received."¹

There is a difficult and obscure chapter, Isaiah xviii., which may best be brought into connection with the events of 720 B.C. An embassy arrives by sea in vessels of papyrus from a land which was intersected by rivers, described by a peculiar usage as "across (i.e. athwart, astride) the rivers of Cush" (ver. 1). There seems to be no reasonable escape from the view that Cush (Ethiopia) itself is meant. If so, the date and meaning appear to be easy to determine. Isaiah bids the embassy return,² and states that Judah will be neutral. "For thus hath the Lord said unto me, I will be still, and I will behold in My dwelling place; like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest" (xviii. 4). He further predicts in figurative language that there will be a great defeat (5 f.), followed by a present from Ethiopia. Of the present and its circumstances we know nothing, but for the rest the oracle best fits 720 B.C. In that year Sibe and his confederates fought against Assyria. Judah remained neutral. They would have been likely to send an embassy in the hope of inducing Hezekiah to join them. This was not the case in 713 B.C. Then it was the Syrians who vainly sent to Egypt for help, not Ethiopia sending to Jerusalem. Judah was not neutral on that occasion. In 702 B.C. again the initiative appears to have been with the Syrians (cp. Isa. xxxi.) and Hezekiah was a protagonist of the war. Nor is the prophecy appropriate to the war which led to the fall

¹ General Inscription of Sargon II. ll. 25-27, Rogers, *op. cit.* 331 f.

² R.V. wrongly inserts "saying" in verse 2. The word is not in the Hebrew and ruins the meaning of the verse. The following words are Isaiah's answer, not the ambassadors' message.

of Samaria, for Isaiah could not have written in the terms of verse 4 if the northern kingdom had been involved in hostilities. The intrigues that preceded the troubles of 720 offer the most likely occasion for the embassy. The prophet's answer appears to be very diplomatically conceived. There is no hint as to which side will be the sufferer in the disaster described in 6 f. No doubt his remarks about the present are as ambiguous as the description of the battle. Isaiah foresaw that the Ethiopians would be defeated and so expressed himself as not to hurt or alarm the ambassadors. His language is parallel to that of the Delphic oracle which advised that if Croesus crossed the Halys he would destroy a mighty empire. This defeat of Sibe for the time put an end to Ethiopian power in lower Egypt. As Sargon says in his annals, "Sib'u fled alone like a shepherd whose sheep are stolen and disappeared" (l. 29).¹ Pharaoh, king of Egypt, i.e. probably Osorkon III, thereupon sent tribute.²

The result of the disappearance of Ethiopian power in Egypt was to create a state of affairs similar to that described in Isaiah xix. 1-15, though without the civil war (so far as we know). "And I will stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt shall be made void in the midst of it; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek unto the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards" (2-3).

"Egypt," writes Breasted,³ "had now been under the divided authority of numerous local dynasts for probably over a century and a half." After quoting Isaiah xix. 1-15 he adds, "no truer picture could possibly be portrayed."

In 715 B.C. there was an Assyrian expedition against Arabia. In lines 95-99 of his annals Sargon tells us that he subjugated the tribes Thamud, Ibâdidi, Marsimani, Haiapâ the distant Arabians who inhabit the wilderness.

¹ Rogers, *op. cit.* p. 327.

² General Inscription l. 27.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 547.

He transported their remnant to Samaria and settled them there. Samsi, queen of Aribi, It'amrâ the Sabaean sent tribute.

Not long afterwards Ashdod caused anxiety. Azuri its king "planned in his heart to bring no more tribute, and sent to the kings of his neighbourhood to stir up enmity against Assyria."¹ Sargon consequently replaced him on the throne by his brother Akhimiti. A Greek adventurer ousted the latter in his turn. This led to an Assyrian expedition in 713. "The Tartan came to Ashdod when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod" (Isa. xx. 1). An inscription, which is unhappily mutilated, contains the following information :

. . . (29) to punish (?) the people of Philistia, Judah, Edom, (30) Moab, those who live by the sea, and brought tribute and (31) presents to Ashur, my lord. (32) Planning hostilities, to rebel against me (33) they sent their presents to Pir'u, (34) king of Egypt, a prince who could not help them, that he might set himself (35) in hostility to me, they invited him into a confederation.²

From another inscription we learn that the Greek soldier

"who heard from afar (102) the approach of my column, fled to the borders of Egypt, (103) which lies before Melucha [Ethiopia], and was seen no more. (104) Ashdod, Gimtu [Gath], Ashdudimmu (105) I besieged [and] conquered; I seized as booty his gods, his wife, his sons and daughters, (106, 107) possessions and goods, the treasures of his palaces, together with the people of his land. (107) Those cities I took anew, and (108) I caused to dwell in them people of lands, which were the spoil of my hands, (109) from the lands of the east. I set my officers over them, I added them to the people of Assyria, they gave obedience."³

"Over them," writes Olmstead, "was probably placed that Mitinti we meet as king early in the reign of Sennacherib."⁴

Thus we see that the events of 720 and 713 B.C. completely carry out that part of Isaiah's Philistine oracle (xiv. 28-32) that dealt with the "basilisk."

¹ Sargon's General Inscription, 90 f.

² Sargon's B. Prism, Rogers, *op. cit.* p. 330.

³ Sargon's General Inscription, lines 101-9, Rogers, *op. cit.* pp. 328 ff.

⁴ *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon* [1908], p. 80.

It is usually assumed that Isaiah xxx. 1-5 refers to the negotiations with Egypt in connection with the crisis of 701. But in view of Sargon's account of the events of 713 it would seem that this is a better date for it. Obviously on this occasion Egypt did nothing, and the words of Isaiah xxx. 5, "a people that cannot profit them, that are not an help nor profit, but a shame and also a reproach" are closely paralleled by Sargon's "a prince who could not help them." The position of Bocchoris at this time amply explains his quiescence. He was living under the shadow of the Ethiopian power. Shabaka was to terminate his reign and do him to death a year later. This made it impossible for him to spare men to intervene in Palestine.

Moab, as we have seen, was punished in 713, though unfortunately the mutilated condition of the inscription does not permit us much knowledge. Now it is remarkable that Isaiah xvi. 14, after quoting an earlier oracle, dates the misfortune of Moab within three years "according to the years of a hireling," and xxi. 16 predicts the doom of Arabia in one year, again using the peculiar expression "according to the years of a hireling." We have found Assyrian expeditions in 715 and 713 respectively. It is natural to conjecture that both xvi. 14 and xxi. 16, which are obviously from the same hand, are also of the same date and were composed in 716 B.C. The unusually sympathetic tone of the oracle relating to Moab supports this view. As a rule Judah was bitterly hostile to its neighbour. But now they were allies against the power that menaced their vital interests. Whether the castigation of Moab was as severe as the prediction would seem to imply may be doubted. It is quite possible that this is in fact an instance of conditional prophecy, and that Isaiah's opposition to the revolt caused the Moabites to adopt a less prominent attitude in opposing Assyria and consequently to incur milder punishment. But in any case it was effective enough. When next we meet with Moab in 701 (on the Taylor prism) it seems to be an Assyrian vassal of small account.

It should also be noted that Isaiah xxi. 11 f., which relates to Edom, shows a friendly relationship with that country

that is quite unlike the ordinary prophetic tone. Having regard to the general feeling between Judah and Edom and the frequency with which the two peoples were on bad terms, it is matter for remark that the Edomites should have sent to consult a Jewish seer. This is but one of the touches in the collection of oracles of foreign nations that fit into the facts of Isaiah's age. In 713, as we have seen, Judah, Edom and Moab jointly incurred the wrath of the Assyrian king. We may therefore with probability hazard the conjecture that this oracle was given when the preparations for the revolt were brewing. It is a diplomatic refusal of advice. It was because Edom and Moab were allies of Judah that the oracles relating to them are so sympathetic in their tone.

The result of all these events is aptly summarised by Dr. Hall :

"Only Judah and the Phœnician cities still preserved a semi-independent position within the empire ; elsewhere the local rulers had all been removed and their territories had been directly annexed to Assyria and were administered by Assyrian officials. The boundaries of the empire had been rounded off and fixed from Cilicia to the Persian Gulf. This was the work of Sargon." ¹

¹ *Ancient History of the Near East*, 5th Ed., p. 480.

CHAPTER III

Isaiah and Sennacherib

WE now come to a crisis which must rank as one of the great turning points in the history of the world. The greatest power of the age was to throw its forces against the little kingdom of Judah, and on the issue depended not merely the continued existence of the state for another century but also the survival of Jewish nationality and the fate of monotheism. It is well to realise this. The northern kingdom had disappeared in 721 B.C. Its condition had however been such that the blow had been much more serious for the national ideal than for the religious. As we have seen ¹ an imageless monotheism would have meant the political collapse of the state that Jeroboam I had founded, and its political submersion was really indispensable for the purification of the faith. It was otherwise with Judah. There a reforming monarch sat on the throne who had done his best to purge the nation of its gross idolatry. Had Jerusalem fallen and its inhabitants suffered deportation, the whole people must have judged the religion a failure. More than a century later we find men arguing against Jeremiah. "But we will certainly perform every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense

¹ P. 21.

to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine" (Jer. xlv. 17 f.). Those contentions were obviously reasonable and logical in the view of that age. Had Jerusalem been taken in the reign of Hezekiah such reasoning as that urged by the worshippers of the queen of heaven would have been unanswerable, and the religion of Moses and the prophets would have stood out as an exploded superstition. If there had been deportations then and the exile had lasted till the days of Cyrus (i.e. over 160 years later), the return would not have been monotheistic, and in any case it would have been confronted by a mixed population in Jerusalem itself. After the lapse of so long a period but few of the descendants of the exiles would have returned, far too few to establish even such a struggling autonomous community as we witness in the post-exilic documents. Both religion and nationality were thus at stake, and with the religion the possibility of the future birth of Christianity and Islam was involved. What Marathon and Salamis were to the Greeks and to all civilisation that owes a debt to the culture of Hellas, that the saving of Jerusalem from Sennacherib was to the Jews and to all religion that has been influenced by them.

That the issue was what we know it to have been was due to the attitude of one man who in this crisis realised to the full his own ideal of manhood. "And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. xxxii. 2). Several prophets had foretold the result, but it was he and he alone who ensured it when the crisis actually came.

This was the highest point reached by Isaiah in his political activity. That he deservedly enjoyed high esteem is shown by the way in which foreign embassies consulted him. But there was not as yet anything to give his contemporaries his full measure, and it happened that there was strong prophetic warrant for the course which Hezekiah took. Isaiah himself had for years been foretelling that Jerusalem would remain inviolate (see e.g. xiv. 30, 32 dating from 727 B.C.) even when predicting

disaster for the Philistines. And there was another oracle to the same effect (Zech. ix. 8). This was of the highest authority, for all the other items of the prophecy had been realised.¹ It was in Philistine troubles (which led to the fulfilment of the prediction) that the war with Sennacherib seems to have begun. Hezekiah "smote the Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchman to the fenced city" (2 Kings xviii. 8). Padi king of Ekron was deposed and imprisoned in Jerusalem. Ekron had become like the Jebusite.

The view that there was only one campaign of Sennacherib against Hezekiah has often been challenged in recent years. In addition to his invasion of 701 B.C. it is thought that he made another expedition some time between 688 and 682 B.C. and that it is to this that 2 Kings xix. 9 ff. refers. The chief supports of this theory are derived from the main features of the narratives of Kings and the Taylor prism which will be considered immediately, but stress is also laid on the expression King as applied to Tirhakah² and on the dating of Sennacherib's assassination (xix. 35-37) as following closely on his return from Palestine though it did not occur until 681 B.C. This however is only a natural foreshortening of past events due to the words of Isaiah in xix. 7, which is admittedly connected with the invasion of 701 and not with the hypothetical siege in or after 688. Reliance is also placed on a fragmentary text of Sennacherib's narrating a defeat of Telhunu, queen of Arabia. This is undated, but is assigned to *circa* 690 B.C. As Assyrian kings habitually took credit for the actions of their subordinates it may be doubted whether this is sufficient proof that Sennacherib himself was in the west. In any case it only evidences the presence of a force small enough to operate in the desert where the lack of water would severely restrict the numbers employed and does not suggest an army capable of menacing a state that might receive assistance from Egypt. There is no hint of a second Assyrian campaign against Hezekiah anywhere in the monuments in addition to those of 713 and 701 B.C., and the chronology is strongly against it. Hezekiah, who had acceded in

¹ See pp. 113 ff.

² On this see p. 99 n.

727, would require to have ten or fifteen years added to his twenty-nine years' reign, Isaiah's activity, which had begun in the year in which Uzziah died, would need corresponding prolongation, and finally the chronology of the later kings of Judah, which fits the facts perfectly,¹ would be thrown into hopeless confusion.

This then brings us to a consideration of the narratives of Sennacherib's invasion. According to 2 Kings the order of events is as follows:—(1) Sennacherib attacks and captures the fortresses of Judah, whereupon Hezekiah sends to him at Lachish to make his submission and agrees to the tribute he demands, viz. thirty talents of gold and 300 talents of silver (xviii. 13b-16).² (2) Thereupon Sennacherib sends envoys to demand the surrender of Jerusalem and the well-known scene in which Rabshakeh taunts the Jews takes place. For our present purposes attention must be called to two features. Emphasis is laid on the futility of expecting help from Egypt (xviii. 21), but it is not in any way suggested that there has been a battle with Egyptian troops. We know from the Taylor prism that Sennacherib in fact defeated the Egyptians at Eltakeh. The language used here seems to imply that no such encounter had yet taken place and that the intervention of Egypt was still only a hope. The Assyrian argument now is that Pharaoh is a broken reed to lean on and will assuredly disappoint the hope by not coming to the assistance of his ally. The demands made clearly foreshadow transportation: "Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make your peace with me, and come out to me; and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern; *until I come and take you away to a land like your own land*, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and honey, that ye may live, and not

¹ On this see pp. 155-161.

² The presence of Sennacherib at Lachish is confirmed by an inscription of 701 on a relief " (1) Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria, (2) seated himself on a throne and the (3) prisoners of Lakish marched before him " (Rogers, *op. cit.* 345). This disposes of the view that 2 Kings xviii. 13b-16 refers to 713 B.C. when Sargon's Tartan came to Ashdod, not Lachish.

die : and hearken not unto Hezekiah when he persuadeth you, saying, The Lord will deliver us " (2 Kings xviii. 31-32). When Isaiah is consulted he foretells that Sennacherib will hear a rumour and return to his land (xix. 7). The envoys go back to Sennacherib who has now moved from Lachish to Libnah (xviii. 17-xix. 8). (3) The Assyrian king next hears that Tirhakah is advancing to fight him (9a). Probably the narrator thought that it was to this rumour that Isaiah's oracle referred : but that was not the meaning of the prophet who distinctly implies that the rumour will cause a return to Assyria, not a battle with Egypt. (4) The Hebrew text then proceeds " And he again sent messengers " (9b). Thus the account of the advance to Eltakeh and the subsequent battle have been cut out of the narrative at this point. There is no further reference to Egypt as a possible factor in the future course of events. If Sennacherib's second message boasted of his victory, which is probable enough, this feature either was not incorporated in the Hebrew narrative or has been removed. But in Isaiah's prophecy Sennacherib is credited with some such boast : " With the sole of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of Egypt " (xix. 24). Not improbably this refers to some announcement of the Assyrian victory and of Sennacherib's intention to invade Egypt. Subsequently the plague forced the retreat (xix. 9b-36). This latter feature is confirmed by a story of Herodotus (ii. 141) according to which Sennacherib on attempting to invade Egypt was compelled to retire with great loss through the action of mice. It is well known that they carry bubonic plague. It is noteworthy that Herodotus makes Pelusium the scene of the disaster, which looks as if Sennacherib had actually invaded Egypt, and it is difficult to imagine that the Egyptians could have invented such a legend unless an invasion actually began. This is not confirmed by 2 Kings xix. 35 which makes the disaster occur in the night following Isaiah's prophecy, but it appears to agree with the prediction itself. " And this shall be the sign unto thee : ye shall eat this year that which groweth of itself, and in the second year that which springeth of the same ; and in the third year sow ye, and reap and plant vineyards, and

eat the fruit thereof" (xix. 29). If Sennacherib had finally retreated the next day the ordinary processes of cultivation would probably have been resumed more rapidly, even allowing for the hindrances created by the devastation which may have resulted from the war. It is therefore possible that the narrative of Kings is once more foreshortening the event.

Be that as it may, we know that Sennacherib did hear the report which caused him to return to his own country.

"Sennacherib had left Babylonia in the full enjoyment of peace, but he had also sown thoroughly the seeds of unrest. Bel-ibni, one of his own creatures, was on the throne, but however well disposed he was, there was no hope that he might successfully resist the distemper of the people. . . . Sennacherib was now deeply embroiled in the western troubles, and the Babylonians thoroughly understood them, for news travelled far and fast in the ancient Orient. The time was, to their mind, auspicious for the reassertion of national ideals. No matter what Bel-ibni may have desired, he was forced by resistless public sentiment into a position hostile to Assyria. Ever ready for any chance at his old enemy, Merodach-baladan of the Sea Lands joined in the rebellion, and the Chaldeans, under a native prince named Mushezib-Marduk, also engaged in it."¹ Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Micah v. 4 f. "And this shall be peace: when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces (?), then shall we raise (?) against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: and he (?) shall deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our border."²

¹ R. W. Rogers, *History of Babylonia and Assyria*, 6th Ed. [1915], ii. p. 373.

² The text of Micah v. 4 f. (5 f.) is uncertain. In 4 (5) the Greek had a reading that differed from our Hebrew by one letter. It renders "will be raised" for "we shall raise." In the following verse most modern commentators read "*they* shall deliver" for "he shall deliver." These are not the only respects in which the text of this passage has suffered, but their correction suffices for our present purpose. With these slight changes the passage is in

It is evident then that both motives combined to lead Sennacherib to retire in disaster. The revolt by itself might have called for his return and yet have permitted him to leave a sufficient force to deal with Jerusalem after the victory at Eltakeh had relieved him from all danger on the side of Egypt, but the plague made this impossible. On the other hand had Babylon remained quiet possibly the Assyrian army might have been strong enough to take Jerusalem even in spite of the plague. At any rate both reasons given by Isaiah are supported by the historical facts.

According to the Taylor Prism ¹ if we assume the events

substance "if Ashur comes into our land . . . seven shepherds and eight principal men will be raised against him, and they will pasture the land of Ashur with the sword . . . and will deliver us from Ashur." This bears an extraordinary resemblance to what actually happened. On Ashur see Appendix II. It only remains to remark that the expression "seven shepherds and eight principal men" is not to be taken as signifying literally those numbers. Hebrew numbers were used in this way to express indefiniteness, see e.g. Eccles. xi. 2. We thus have a fragment of an oracle which corresponds precisely to known events. The only reasonable inference is that those and no others are the events it is predicting.

¹ Column II, 34-83: In my third campaign I marched against the land of the Hittites. The fear of the splendor of my dominion overwhelmed Luli (Elulæus), king of Sidon, and he fled far away into the sea and died. Sidon the great, Sidon the less, Bit-zitte, Sariptu (Zarephath), Makhalliba, Ushu, Akzib, and Akku (Acco), his strong cities, defended by walls, provisioned and provided with water, his garrison (?) cities, the might of the arms of Ashur, my lord, overwhelmed them, and they bowed at my feet. I placed Tuba'lu (Ethobal) upon the royal throne over them and fixed upon him yearly and unchanging taxes and tribute for my dominion. Minkhimmu (Menahem) of Shamsimuruna, Tuba'lu (Ethobal) of Sidon, Abdili'ti of Arvad (Arados), Urumilki of Gebal (Byblos), Mitinti of Ashdod, Budu-ilu of Bit Ammanaa (Beth Ammon), Kammusunadbi of Moab, Malik-rammu of Edom, all kings of the Amurru-Country, districts of great extent, brought rich presents before me, for the fourth time (?) and kissed my feet.

But Sidqa, the king of Ashkelon, who had not submitted to my yoke, I carried away the gods of his father's house, himself, his wife, his sons, his daughters, his brothers, his seed of his father's house, and I brought him to Assyria. Sharruludari, son of Rukib-tu, their former king, I appointed over the people of Ashkelon, and the payment of taxes, presents to my dominion, I laid upon him, that he might bear my yoke.

In the course of my campaign I besieged Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Benebarqa, Azuru, cities of Sidqa, which had not quickly submitted

to be in chronological order the story is as follows:—

(1) A great victory is won over the Egyptians at Eltakeh.

at my feet, I captured them and carried off their booty. The governors, princes, and people of Ekron, who had cast into iron fetters Padi, their king, (who had been faithful to the commands and compact of Assyria), and had given him over to Hezekiah of Judah, in a hostile manner,—their hearts feared. They summoned the kings of Egypt, the bowmen, chariots, [and] horses of the king of Melukhkha, forces without number, and they came to their help. In the neighbourhood of Altaqu (Eltekeh) their line of battle was drawn up against me, they consecrated their arms. With the help of Ashur, my lord, I fought with them and accomplished their defeat. The commander of the chariots, and the sons of the king of Egypt, with the commander of the chariots of the king of Melukhkha, my hands captured alive in the battle. I besieged and captured Altaqu (Eltekeh) [and] Tamna (Timnath) and carried away their booty.

Column III, 1-41: I drew near to Amkaruna (Ekron); the governors and princes, who had committed sin I slew, and hung their bodies on poles around the city. The townsfolk who had committed wickedness and offence I counted as spoil; to the rest of them, who had not committed sin and wickedness, in whom no guilt was found, I proclaimed pardon. Padi, their king, I brought out of Jerusalem, and set him on the throne of dominion over them, and the tribute of my dominion I laid upon him. And of Hezekiah, the Judæan, who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six strong cities, with walls, the smaller cities which were around them, without number, by the battering of rams and the assault of engines, the attack of foot-soldiers, mines, breaches, and axes, I besieged and captured them. Two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty men, young, old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number I brought out from them and counted as booty. [Hezekiah] himself I shut up like a caged bird within Jerusalem, his royal city. I cast up entrenchments against him, and whosoever came forth from the gate of his city I punished (?) him. His cities which I had plundered, I separated from his land, and gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Amqaruna and Sillibel, king of Gaza, and diminished his land. Beside the former taxes, paid yearly, I added the tribute and presents of my dominion, and laid these upon them. As for Hezekiah, the fear of the majesty of my dominion overwhelmed him and the Urbi, and his regular troops, whom he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem his royal city, deserted. With thirty talents of gold [and] eight hundred talents of silver, precious stones, stibium, uknu-stones, couches of ivory, seats of ivory, elephant hide, ivory, ushu and ukarinnu wood, diverse objects, a heavy treasure, and his daughters, the women of his palace, male musicians, female musicians, he dispatched after me to Nineveh, my capital city. He sent his ambassador to give tribute and make submission. (Taylor Prism, col. II, 34—col. III, 41. R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, pp. 340-4.)

(2) Padi of Ekron is released from Jerusalem *without Hezekiah's having submitted*. (3) Sennacherib then captures Hezekiah's fortresses and blockades him in Jerusalem. (4) "The Urbi (Arabians) and his regular troops whom he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem his royal city, deserted." (5) Hezekiah sends thirty talents of gold, 800 talents of silver and sundry other costly gifts after Sennacherib to Nineveh where his ambassador makes submission.

This agrees with Kings in three points. Sennacherib did not take Jerusalem or invade Egypt successfully or deport Judaeans. Moreover autonomous administrations were generally left by Assyria only after a first rebellion,¹ not after a second, and this was the second time Hezekiah had given trouble. As we have seen² he had been implicated in the revolts of 713 B.C.

It is a commonplace that Assyrian inscriptions record only the victories of the kings and make no mention of their failures or their perfidy. When this account is carefully scrutinised it cannot be doubted that Sennacherib's scribe is here engaged in covering up a disaster and perhaps also something else. If Hezekiah had not submitted till after Sennacherib's return, how could Padi have been released by the Assyrians, reinstated in his dominions and given an increase of territory? Why was the siege of Jerusalem raised before Hezekiah submitted? Why did Hezekiah send to Nineveh to make submission when Sennacherib had returned and there was no immediate danger?

Further the capture of Hezekiah's fortresses and the mutiny of his troops is also placed after the battle. But military considerations make this very improbable. If Ekron and all Judaea were still in hostile hands Sennacherib's communications when he was at Eltakeh, Lachish and Libnah would have been thoroughly unsafe, and he himself would have been in a position of the greatest danger between the Egyptians and Judah before the battle. Again, Isaiah xxx. distinctly suggests that Egypt came up too late. "For Egypt helpeth in vain, and

¹ P. Rost Keilschrifttexte Tiglat-Pileasers III [1893], i. p. XXXI.

² Above, p. 37.

to no purpose : therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still " (7).¹ This is thoroughly apt and intelligible if the army of the Nile did not arrive till after Sennacherib had overrun Judah and Hezekiah had ceased to count as a military factor, but it would have been unjust and inappropriate once Egypt had taken the field. The proper course was for the Egyptians to advance and join hands with Hezekiah and the other members of the confederation in time to defeat Sennacherib on his arrival in the west, not to permit him to dispose of the members of the alliance in detail. Instead of that the Assyrians were given time to deal first with Sidon and then to advance on the other allies successively, and it is obvious that Judah had been rendered powerless before the battle of Eltakeh.

It seems certain then that Sennacherib's arrangement of events is not chronological. It is designed to conceal the disaster that befell the Assyrians and the perfidy of the king. On the other hand the desertion of Hezekiah's troops is doubtless true and is the real reason for the king's submission. The actual order of events seems therefore to have been as follows :—

Sennacherib invaded Judaea, captured the fortresses and invested Jerusalem. Hezekiah's troops mutinied. He made submission and released Padi on an agreement that the payment of the tribute demanded would bring peace. Perhaps he delivered the sums specified in Kings at that time. In any case Sennacherib having secured his ally then broke faith and demanded the surrender of Jerusalem. The taunt of 2 Kings xviii. 23 gains fresh point if the main portion of Hezekiah's army had deserted. " Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them." Isaiah at this time foretold that Sennacherib would be called home. Tirhakah's advance relieved the pressure, but after the victory a fresh demand for surrender was made. It was rejected. The plague crippled the Assyrians, and in view of this and the danger from Babylon

¹ The Hebrew text is uncertain. Probably, however, this rendering of R.V. approximates to the original words of the prophet.

Sennacherib retired. Thereupon Hezekiah, realising that he could not withstand the full might of Assyria in the long run, took advantage of the favourable opportunity to send an embassy to Nineveh with additional tribute to that originally demanded and make the submission that was necessary to avoid a fresh invasion in a future year.

In the light of Sennacherib's inscription the meaning of Isaiah vii. 17-20 leaps to the eyes. "The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; the king of Assyria. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all pastures. In that day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, which is in the parts beyond the river, with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard."

We have already seen¹ that this is a prophecy of which the introduction is missing and that it has nothing to do with its present context. The prophet is addressing a monarch in whose reign will occur the greatest misfortune that Judah has experienced since the schism. When we look at Sennacherib's statements as to the numbers counted as prisoners and the fate of Hezekiah's cities and territory there can be no doubt as to the literal accuracy of this remark. The monarch can only be Hezekiah. In that day there will be a conflict between Egypt and Assyria in a land which is poetically described in verse 19. "They summoned the kings of Egypt . . . and they came to their help. In the neighbourhood of Eltakeh, their line of battle was drawn up against me, etc." The shaving with the hired razor foretold in verse 20 is the terrible calamity of Sennacherib's invasion. To all appearances verses 23-5 are the continuation of this prophecy. In copying a MS. in which they preceded verses 21-2 displacement through homoeography might easily have occurred. Both sections begin with the words "it shall

¹ P. 28 n.

come to pass on that day," and a copyist's eye could easily have slipped from their first occurrence to their second.

As already observed the beginning of the prophecy is missing. The introduction explaining how Isaiah came to be speaking to Hezekiah has been lost. Further we note that it is altogether out of place. Verses 21 and 22 on the other hand may be the continuation of verse 16. Apparently at some time in the history of the transmission a fragment containing 17-20, 23-35 was accidentally inserted between a writing ending with verse 16 and another beginning with 21. Elsewhere ¹ I have adduced evidence to show that the bookroll was not the earliest form of book in Israel, and it is easiest to suppose that these displacements arose as a result of the earlier transmission of the prophet's works before they were copied out in scroll form.²

This great inscription further illuminates Isaiah xx. "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it"; i.e. in 713 B.C. Isaiah received a command to walk naked for three years. Since not even a prophet could have walked for three years in the space of one, it follows that the prophecy dates from 711 or 710 B.C. Thus we see him foretelling the defeat of the Egyptians and Ethiopians at Eltakeh in 701 at least nine years before it occurred, and the literal accuracy of the prophecy is established by Sennacherib's record.³

¹ *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct. 1920.

² Some representative critical opinions on this prophecy will be found in Appendix III.

³ Gray however writes: "His expectation that Assyria would take captive and carry into exile the people of Egypt and Ethiopia was not fulfilled; it was a full generation after the capture of Ashdod before an Assyrian army even entered Egypt!" (*Isaiah I*, p. 343). A reference to Isaiah xx. shows that the prophet spoke not of the people but of "the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia" (ver. 4) and did not suggest an invasion of Egypt, though as we have seen Sennacherib may have penetrated to Pelusium. You may certainly carry away captives as a result of a successful invasion of their countries, but if the forces of those countries march out to meet you in foreign territory a like result may ensue. That Isaiah is contemplating a battle at or near the Syrian coast appears clearly from verses 5 f. "And they shall be dismayed and ashamed,

In Isaiah x. 5-27 we have a long prediction of the events of 701. Other oracles that foretell the invasion and its failure are xiv. 24-27, 28-32 (in part) ¹ and xvii. 12-14. The Egyptian negotiations and the ultimate defeat of Tirhakah are the subject of Isaiah xxxi. The issue could hardly be announced in clearer language than xxxi. 3.

The conduct of the troops is the burden of xxii. 2b-14. Relief at the deliverance could not obscure the disgrace of the position. Objection has been taken to the mention of Elam in verse 6 on the ground that throughout this period its relations with Assyria were, so far as we know, hostile, but it appears to have been a practice of the Assyrians to make it a condition of peace that they should receive the aid of nations they subdued. "Since Sennacherib's day the ranks of the army had been filled with levies drawn from her subject peoples, or with mercenary troops, and these were a poor substitute for the race of hardy fighters who had been sacrificed in their country's countless wars." ²

Isaiah xxxiii. reflects the position when Sennacherib in spite of Hezekiah's submission sought to enter Jerusalem and transport its inhabitants. Its reproaches of treachery, its references to the treachery which others would show to Sennacherib (ver. 1), its prayer for help in the awful position of the people (ver. 2), its forecasts of the result (vers. 3-5, 10-12), its allusion to the weeping of the ambassadors of peace (ver. 7) and the effect of the invasion (vers. 8 f.) are alone sufficient to establish this, and the rest of the chapter tells the same tale.

A remarkable prophecy is found in xxx. 6 ff. It shows because of Ethiopia their expectation and of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitant of this coastland shall say in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and we, how shall we escape? That is language that implies that the inhabitants of the coastal region will be spectators of a disaster inflicted on Ethiopia and Egypt on which they will be relying to escape from Assyria's tyranny. It will take place under their eyes, not at a distance. An invasion of distant Ethiopia on the other hand would exclude such a situation and could only be effected long after the coast of Syria had been subjugated.

¹ See above, p. 31.

² L. W. King, *History of Babylon* [1915], p. 276.

us that the intervention of Egypt had been bought (ver. 6) and that the Egyptian party had been strongly opposed, though in vain, by Isaiah (and perhaps other prophets) (vers. 9 f.). Only after the complete destruction of the means of salvation on which they relied (vers. 12 ff.) and the disgrace of the Jewish troops (vers. 16 f.) would God intervene to save the people (ver. 18). Zion should be saved and there would be a return from idolatry (vers. 19 ff.). Prosperity would follow (vers. 23 ff.). Then he returns once more to picture the disaster that would befall Assyria (vers. 24 ff.).

Isaiah xxxii. 9-20 is another prediction of the invasion and xxix. 1-8 foretells the siege of Jerusalem.¹

While Isaiah is the prophet who is especially connected with Sennacherib's invasion, he does not stand absolutely alone. Hosea i. 7 is in point. "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen." And in viii. 14 the prophet foretold the fall of the Judæan cities. "For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and builded palaces; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the castles thereof." The oldest Zechariah after foretelling the misfortunes of the Philistines, and in particular that Ekron would be as the Jebusite (ix. 7), continues, "And I will encamp about mine house against the army, that none pass through

¹ An attempt has been made to find a discrepancy between this and 2 Kings xix. 32, but in vain. We know from the Taylor Prism that Sennacherib in fact besieged and blockaded Hezekiah in Jerusalem but did not enter it. An Assyrian siege fell into several stages which are described in the article Siege in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (1915). After a city had been invested and the line of circumvallation completed, but not till then, a mound was "built up to the height of the walls, so as to command the streets of the city, and strike terror into the besieged" (p. 2787a). Then came the battering rams joined to movable towers which protected the men. It is to these that Isaiah refers with the expression shield. Jerusalem was invested, but in spite of this the later steps were never taken. Owing to Hezekiah's weakness after the desertion of his troops a small force was doubtless sufficient to maintain a blockade and Sennacherib required his main strength elsewhere.

or return: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes" (ix. 8). That seems to be a clear prediction of what happened in 701 B.C. And Zechariah xii. is satisfied by the story of Sennacherib's invasion as we know it from the joint evidence of the inscription, the narrative in Kings and Isaiah's prophecies, but by no other incident in recorded history. The retreat of the Assyrians "saved the tents of Judah first," i.e. the south before the capital which lay in the north. Yet when their sufferings and shame are considered they had but too much reason for mourning.¹ There were also oracles of Micah's, but so far as these have not already been dealt with ² they are best reserved for a later chapter.³

¹ Consider especially the inscriptional evidence that daughters of Hezekiah were sent to Nineveh.

² See above, pp. 32, 45 f.

³ See pp. 118 ff.

CHAPTER IV

The History to the Exile

IN the light of subsequent history Sennacherib's failure to enter Jerusalem was a success of the first importance for the cause of religion and the future of the world, but to contemporary Jews the aspect of their general position was far from satisfactory. Judah had lost her military honour, her treasure, large portions of her territory and her population, her predominant position in southern Syria and her allies. All her fortresses save one had fallen. Her fields had been wasted and two harvests had been lost. What remained was a mere remnant shorn of power and prosperity, condemned to live in vassalage to the great king, impotent henceforth to attempt any revolt or to disobey his behests. The Jews had saved their souls, but they had lost almost everything else; and it is small wonder if there was a reaction against the whole religious and foreign policy which had led to such results. To all appearance the course pursued by Ahaz had been wiser and more successful than the line taken by Hezekiah. Both had had to part with their treasure and had become Assyrian vassals, but the earlier monarch had at least obtained security from his enemies, had been on good terms with the great king and had enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his whole position in Syria improved as the result of the destruction of Aram and the humbling of Israel and the Philistines. Hezekiah's position on the other hand was much more ignominious. His submission was of a thoroughly humiliating character: his relationship to Sennacherib was devoid of any voluntary or qualifying element, and he had been stripped of

territory for the aggrandisement of his Philistine rivals. Ahaz had been on the winning side, Hezekiah on the losing : and it would be difficult to exaggerate the difference this implied.

It is necessary to point to these considerations because they explain the reaction which took place after Hezekiah's reign. It is a mistake to suppose that the desirability of continuing his policy was so obvious to anybody of ordinary intelligence that no other course was conceivable. On the contrary it may well have seemed to contemporaries that if he had been consistently friendly to Assyria and had tolerated idolatrous cults he would have insured Judah's safety, prosperity and even aggrandisement. Nor is it clear that the calculation was wrong from a purely material point of view. Isaiah certainly had strongly condemned the dependence on Egypt. Even on his showing, therefore, Hezekiah's line of action had been inexpedient. Probably a monarch who had been guided by him would have been entirely submissive to Assyria in political matters while seeking to oppose the growth of its influence in religion. Whether this would have worked in practice is more doubtful. Military and political success is apt to win adherents for the culture of the successful nation, and it is unlikely that the Judah of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. would have proved an exception to the rule. If "the might of the arms of Ashur" could overwhelm the states of Syria and their gods, if Calno was as Carchemish, Hamath as Arpad and Samaria as Damascus, why should not the people of Jerusalem also recognize the superior power of Sennacherib's lord? The policy actually pursued made that at least impossible. Ashur's signal failure to save his big battalions from falling by a sword not of man made it certain that his worship would never take root in Judah. But other cults might fare better.

In any case it is clear that Manasseh, Hezekiah's successor, was a wholehearted exponent of the reaction against his father's policies. Probably because of the failure of Ashur to take Jerusalem his religious outlook does not appear to have had a distinctively Assyrian tinge. It was rather to the old abuses of the religion of Canaan

that he went for his models and the picture that may be obtained from our sources is indeed dark. One of the most authoritative of our informants summarises the matter adequately in the words "And I will cause them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem" (Jer. xv. 4). It is probable that the new king slew the leaders of the party that were faithful to the religion of Hezekiah. "Your own sword hath devoured your prophets like a destroying lion," cries Jeremiah (ii. 30), and Manasseh is accused of having "shed innocent blood very much" (2 Kings xxi. 16, xxiv. 4). In any case the voice of prophecy was silenced soon after his accession. There is an ancient tradition that Manasseh put Isaiah to death. The extant oracles of the great prophet certainly contain material that must have been extremely provocative. "Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned five and fifty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hephzi-bah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (2 Kings xxi. 1 f.). Now Isaiah iii. 25-iv. 1 is a clear prediction of the fall of Jerusalem and 2-6 of the religious glories of the post-exilic capital. As iv. 4 appears to look back to the denunciation of the women in iii. 16 ff. and foretells their sufferings in the death throes of the state the passage seems to be continuous. The condemnation of the women follows naturally on the preceding verses. Their male supporters have oppressed the poor to enable them to flaunt in luxury. Furthermore iii. 1 ff. is most easily understood as a prediction of the first deportation, while iii. 12, if the Hebrew be maintained,¹ can hardly be anything but a description of the state of affairs under Manasseh who ascended the throne at the age of twelve (2 Kings xxi. 1). It cannot be thought that supporters of the new order of things would view the author of this passage with favour.

¹ "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths."

Another great prophecy that refers to the state of affairs is xxiv.-xxvii., on which see Appendix IV. Here it is sufficient to quote the restored text of xxvii. 9 ff. : " On this condition shall the iniquity of Jacob be atoned, and this shall be the price of taking away his sin : by his making all altar stones like pounded chalk stones ; the Asherim shall not stand, and the sun-pillars shall be felled like a forest. Afar off shall the lovely flock be deserted like a flock that is forsaken ; and it shall be at pasture for a long time and couch there ; for it is a people of no understanding ; therefore He that made them will not have compassion on them and He that formed them will show them no favour."

But after any oracles of Isaiah that may belong to the opening of the reign we get complete silence for many years on the part of the prophets whose writings have come down to us.

The Chronicler states that Manasseh was carried to Babylon by the Assyrians and then repented (2 Chron. xxxiii. 10 ff.). The Babylonian imprisonment may well be fact, but had there been any genuine repentance on his part, Jeremiah could not have written as he did. Assyrian sources provide a little supplementary information as to this reign.

In an inscription of Esarhaddon's we find that he demanded of twenty-two kings, of whom Manasseh king of Judah was one, sundry contributions in kind (beams, stones, etc.) for his palace in Nineveh. The date of this is not given.¹ Of his first campaign in 668 B.C. Ashurbanipal writes :

" In the course of my campaign twenty-two kings of the sea coast, of the midst of the sea and of the continent who behold my face (i.e. were my vassals) brought their heavy present before me and kissed my feet. I caused those kings with their forces to proceed with my army by land and by sea. To hasten the assistance (or to the assistance [and] to the protection) of the kings (and) city rulers in Egypt who behold my face I marched hurriedly and advanced to Kâr-bânîti.²

The names of those twenty-two kings are given in another

¹ Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, pp. 356 f.

² Ashurbanipal's *Annals*, Rassam cylinder I, 68-77.

inscription¹ beginning with "Baal king of Tyre, Minsê (Manasseh) king of Jaudu."² The Egyptian army was of course defeated.

Manasseh was succeeded by his son Amon, whose reign, so far as we know, was entirely of a piece with his father's. His successor was Josiah, under whom the pre-exilic Jews were destined to enjoy their last taste of independence. This was due to the Scythian invasion. Dr. Hall writes of this as follows:—

"But a blow had been struck between 628 and 626 which brought Assyria to her knees. The barbarian Scyths, led by Madyes . . . poured over the empire in resistless swarms, ravaging it even to the borders of Egypt, where King Psamatik was fain to buy them off with rich bribes. . . . The village of Skythopolis in later times was the sole permanent relic of their invasion. . . . The great raid lost the whole west to Assyria. After the waters of the invasion had subsided, Josiah of Judah established an independent dominion."³

It is very important for our purpose to notice that Josiah extended his rule over at any rate some of the territory of the former Northern kingdom, for Bethel (2 Kings xxiii. 4, 15 ff.) and some unspecified "cities of Samaria" (19) formed part of his kingdom, while the Chronicler particularises with the words "cities of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon even unto Naphtali" (2 Chron. xxxiv. 6). In accordance with this 223 men of Bethel and Ai figure in the list of those who returned from the Babylonian exile (Ezra ii. 28, Neh. vii. 32). In Jeremiah xli. 5 ff. we read of men from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria coming to offer at Mizpah.

A few years later came Josiah's great reformation based on the finding of the book of the law (623 B.C.) with its declaration "Ye are children of the Lord your God" (Deut. xiv. 1) and its emphasis on the relationship of God and people. Thus predictions of two of the older prophets were marvellously fulfilled. We have already seen⁴ how much of the prophecy of the foolish shepherd (Zech. xi., xiii. 7 ff.) had passed into reality. In the land of Israel two parts had met with the fate foretold. And

¹ Cylinder C, col. I, 23 ff.

² M. Streck, *Assurbanipal* II [1916], pp. 8 f., 138 ff.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 512.

⁴ *Pp.* 24-7.

now the sequel had come out, "but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on My name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is My people and they shall say, The Lord is my God" (Zech. xiii. 8, 9).

Thus, too, the children of Israel after abiding many days without the accessories of monarchy or their sacrificial institutions returned and sought the Lord their God and David their king (Hos. iii. 4 f.). "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up from the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel. Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters Ruhamah" (Hos. ii. 1-3 (i. 10-ii. 1)). The rest of Hosea ii. should also be carefully considered in this connection, for it is obvious that the latter part of the chapter begins to find its fulfilment in the events of this period. "And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgement, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, saith the Lord, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall answer Jezreel. And I will sow her unto Me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not My people, Thou art My people; and they shall say, Thou art my God" (20 (18) ff.).

The permanence of the betrothal between God and Israel that the prophet here contemplates is strikingly illustrated by the fact that the men of Bethel, the headquarters of

the bull worship, ultimately became loyal enough to the prophet's faith to return from the Babylonian exile to the ruined land of their fathers.¹

Nahum i. 13, ii. 1, 3 appears to be a prophecy of the defeat of Assyria, the consequent reunion of Judah and Israel under Josiah and the exhortation to such a revival of the festivals as subsequently took place in the case of Josiah's passover.²

During Josiah's reign Assyria was nearing her doom. Necho the Egyptian Pharaoh set out to invade her in order to secure a share of the spoil. Josiah gave battle at Megiddo, where he was defeated and killed (610 or 609 B.C.). His successor Jehoahaz reigned three months and was then deposed by the Pharaoh in favour of Eliakim, whose name was changed to Jehoiakim.

Jeremiah ii. 4-iii. 5 appears to belong to about this date. In ii. 15-16 we find a clear allusion to Necho's invasion and defeat of Josiah, while 27 points to the Israelites being in trouble. From 18 it appears that there are an Assyrian party and an Egyptian party of whom the prophet disapproves equally, and he foretells (36) that Israel shall be ashamed of Egypt as it had been of Assyria. The breaking of the yoke (presumably the Assyrian yoke) is in the past (ver. 20).³ All these data would be satisfied if we place the passage after the death of Josiah (610 or 609 B.C.) but before the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.). It must be subsequent to the beginning of Assyria's downfall (*circa* 625 B.C.) to account for verse

¹ Hosea is here looking on to the post-exilic period in consonance with the principle of grouping in accordance with the connection in thought which is treated on pp. 147 f. below.

² In the criticism of Nahum one very obvious assumption is generally made which appears to be without foundation, viz. that the prophet delivered only one oracle. There is no reason to suppose that this is true. He may have been prophesying against Nineveh for many years, just as Isaiah and other prophets foretold the salvation of Jerusalem from Sennacherib and matters connected with it many years before the actual events, in different oracles spread over a large interval of time. Hence the current discussions of the date of Nahum seem to me to be of small value.

³ If the Hebrew text is sound. But the Greek has "thou hast broken" which is perhaps more likely and refers to Israel's continuous apostasy.

36. But if this allocation be correct, it throws much light on the condition of the people even after Josiah's reformation. It was not in the power of the king to root out the deep-seated religious abuses. The Hebrew text of 17 "in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, *when He led thee by the way*" brilliantly confirms the view of apostasy after the reformation, but the italicised words are not in the Greek. The latter however had a reading which makes the point not less clearly, "Has not thy forsaking Me procured thee this, saith the Lord thy God?" That can only mean that Israel has forsaken God and been punished by the Egyptian scourge as a result. Again 23 points in the same direction. "How canst thou say, I am not defiled, I have not gone after the Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways." The worship of Baal is surreptitious but undeniable. That would hold good after but not before Josiah's surface cleansing.

In our present text this homily is preceded by a short oracle of promise (ii. 1-3). This may refer to the approaching fate of the Egyptian army in Carchemish, but does not necessarily belong to the same period as what follows. It would be very much more suitable as an early oracle written before the Scythians had come into contact with Assyria.

It was in the reign of ~~Jehoiakim~~ ^{Jehoiakim} that Nineveh fell into the hands of Cyaxares the Mede.

"The city was plundered of everything of value which it contained, and then given to the torch. The houses of the poor, built probably of unburnt bricks, would soon be a ruin. The great palaces, when the cedar beams which supported the upper stories had been burnt off, fell in heaps. Their great, thick walls, built of unburnt bricks with the outer covering of beautiful burnt bricks, cracked open, and when the rain descended the unburnt bricks soon dissolved away into the clay of which they had been made. The inhabitants had fled to the four winds of heaven and returned no more to inhabit the ruins. . . .¹ Nineveh fell in the year 607 or 606 and her inhabitants fled from the stricken city. Some came not

¹ He quotes Zeph. ii. 13-15.

back, but others returned and have left evidence that portions of the city at least were reinhabited. But its real vitality was gone and soon its major buildings could never be restored to royal uses. Then it was that the waters out of heaven, or from the overflowing river made the soft clay a covering over the great palaces and their records. The winds bore seeds into the mass, and a carpet of grass covered the mounds, and stunted trees grew out of them. Year by year the mound bore less resemblance to the site of a city, until no trace remained above ground of the magnificence that once had been. . . . But, though cities might be built upon the soil and men congregate where the Assyrian cities had been, there was in reality no healing of the wound which the Medes had given. The Assyrian empire had come to a final end. As they had done unto others so had it been done unto them."¹

Thus were fulfilled the predictions of Nahum and Zephaniah ii. 13-15.

Jehoiakim had been a vassal of Necho's in the first instance. But in 605 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar, commanding the troops of his father Nabopolassar, defeated the Pharaoh decisively at Carchemish with the result that the whole of Western Asia passed out of Egyptian control and lay open to the Chaldeans. Jehoiakim became a Babylonian vassal, but after three years he rebelled. In the first instance bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites came against him. It may be to this that Zephaniah refers when he writes: "I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, wherewith they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border" (ii. 8), but more probably these invasions followed on earlier hostility in the days of Josiah. The relations between Judah and these two neighbours were seldom cordial, and the fact that in verse 13 the fall of Nineveh has not taken place suggests that the whole chapter dates from the reign of Josiah.

What exactly happened is variously stated. According to 2 Kings xxiv. 6-17 Jehoiakim died and was succeeded by Jehoiachin, in whose reign Nebuchadrezzar captured

¹ Rogers, *History*, ii. 479-482.

Jerusalem. In 2 Chronicles xxxvi., on the other hand, Jerusalem falls in Jehoiakim's reign and the king is bound in fetters to be taken to Babylon. Jeremiah twice (xxii. 18 f., xxxvi. 30) predicted an unhonoured ending for him, but so far as our present knowledge goes the terms are equally compatible with a death in Nebuchadrezzar's hands outside Jerusalem and with burial during the siege but before the fall of the city.

It is noticeable that the Chronicler does not say that Jehoiakim was taken to Babylon. His statement is that "Nebuchadrezzar bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon."¹

The dating of Ezekiel by the years of Jehoiachin's captivity favours the view that the narrative of Kings is correct and Jeremiah xxiv. 1, xxix. 2 seem to be decisive at any rate as to the time of the deportation. Jehoiachin was deposed by Nebuchadrezzar after he had occupied the throne for little more than three months. In addition to the king some thousands of the members of the population, including especially craftsmen and smiths, were carried away to Babylonia. The prophet Ezekiel appears to have been one of the victims.

Nebuchadrezzar raised Zedekiah to the throne of Judah as his vassal. We need not linger over his reign. The end came in 587 B.C. when the Chaldeans captured the city for the last time. This was followed at a short interval by the burning of the temple and the principal buildings of the city, the breaking down of the walls and the captivity of a further large section of the people.

¹ E. Klamroth (*Die Jüdischen Exulanten in Babylonien* [1912] pp. 9-12) thinks that Jehoiakim was deported to Babylon and that Ezekiel xix. refers to the respective fates of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim.

CHAPTER V

The Predictions Concerning Foreign Nations

HAVING now traced the main course of history and prophecy till the exile we are in a position to consider Kuenen's attack on the prophets. The kernel of his *Prophets and Prophecy* consists of chapters v.-viii. They deal respectively with "Unfulfilled Prophecies" relating to (a) the destinies of the heathen nations (chap. v.), (b) the judgments against Israel (chap. vi.) and (c) the future of Israel (chap. vii.), and the fulfilled predictions (chap. viii.). Of these chapters vi. and viii. contain little that calls for more than incidental notice, but chapters v. and vii. are very fierce attacks. Portions of them have in reality been met already in the foregoing chapters, and where it is so we need not repeat what has been said before. Others again need no reply. When Kuenen complains that a prophet did not predict something, the answer is that the prophets were there to give the messages entrusted to them. It is no disparagement of these messages to say that they were limited to particular matters and did not embrace the whole future. If a message relating to say an Assyrian invasion was duly fulfilled, it is nothing to the point to urge that it did not foretell that Nineveh would fall nearly a century later. Again in a few cases it has been thought best to deal with the predictions not in this context but in some other place in connection with other matters that appear germane. With these reservations this chapter is devoted to considering so much of Kuenen's fifth chapter as appears relevant, and the following chapter will deal in like manner with the predictions touching the future of Israel.

Following Kuenen we begin with the Philistines. The oracles of Amos i. 6 ff., Zechariah ix. and Isaiah xiv. 29-32 found their fulfilment in the Assyrian period.¹ We now have to consider Isaiah xi. 14, Joel iv. (iii) 4-8, Ezekiel xxv. 15-17, Zephaniah ii. 4-7, Jeremiah xlvi. We have already seen² that the Philistines met with the fate predicted by Obadiah in the days of Alexander Jannai. It is certainly to this that Isaiah xi. 14 and Zephaniah ii. 4-7 refer. What may have been the case with Joel we do not know since his reference is too vague. It would suit any one of several historical situations so far as we are acquainted with their facts, though of course fuller information might (and probably would) exclude dates that now seem possible. That the Chaldeans in fact ruled over Philistia we know from an incidental reference of Nabonidus,³ and Jeremiah xlvi. with its reference to waters rising up out of the north, etc. (ver. 2) apparently contemplates this.⁴ From verse 4 it would seem that the fate of the Philistines which the prophet foretells stood in some connection with the subjugation of Phoenicia. It seems reasonable to suppose that Ezekiel xxv. 15-17 envisages the same campaign.

In approaching the prophecies relating to Tyre we must commence by considering certain peculiarities that complicate the enquiry. Apparently the name Tyre could be given to two different sites. First there is the well-known island city now joined to the mainland by the mole which Alexander the great constructed. This remained an island site till Alexander's siege. Secondly "the Greeks thought that the older site was on the mainland at Palae-Tyrus, which Strabo places 30 stadia away (xvi. ii. 23) by streams. This is the present Râs el 'Ain, about 3½ miles S. of the island, with two springs, whence an aqueduct led to the shore near the city. . . . It is mainly mediaeval; but Lieut. Mantell discovered in 1881

¹ See pp. 27, 30 f., 34 f., 37, 46 f., 113 ff. ² See p. 18.

³ S. Langdon, *Die Neubabylonischen Königsinschriften* [1912], pp. 220 f.

⁴ According to ver. 1 the chapter was composed before Pharaoh smote Gaza. But it is not to his capture of the city that the prophet seems to look.

that at one point there are remains of false arches, which may be as old as the time when (according to Menander, as quoted by Josephus, 9 *Ant.* xiv. 2) Shalmaneser IV (? V H.M.W.) besieged Tyre (before 722 B.C.), and cut off the water supplied by an aqueduct. . . . The Greek idea that Palae-Tyros (" Old Tyre ") was on the mainland, 30 stadia away, and Pliny's assertion that the city stretched 19 miles (*Hist. Nat.* v. 17), were unfounded, though a ruined settlement at the head of the aqueduct may, in Strabo's time, have been older than the flourishing city on the island appeared to be."¹

We must therefore bear in mind the fact that in addition to the island city there is the mainland Tyre.

In the earlier period we find predictions against Tyre and Sidon in Zechariah ix. 2-4² and Isaiah xxiii., and against Tyre only in Amos i. 9 f. The facts are as follows :—

According to Josephus the archives of Tyre attest two expeditions of Shalmaneser's in the reign of Eluleus (Assyrian Luli) the second of which was marked by a five years' siege of island Tyre. Mainland Tyre had been captured on the first occasion, but subsequently revolted with other cities, thus leading to the second invasion.³

¹ C. R. Conder in Murray's *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* [1908], p. 910.

² On the date of this passage see pp. 111 ff.

³ " And now the King of Assyria invaded all Syria and Phenicia in a hostile manner. The name of the king is also set down in the archives of Tyre, for he made an expedition against Tyre in the reign of Eluleus ; and Menander attests to it, who, when he wrote his Chronology, and translated the archives of Tyre into the Greek language, gives us the following history : ' One whose name was Eluleus, reigned thirty-six years : this king, upon the revolt of the Citteans, sailed to them, and reduced them again to a submission. Against these did the king of Assyria send an army, and in a hostile manner overrun all Phenicia, but soon made peace with them all, and returned back : but Sidon, and Ace, and Palaetyrus revolted ; and many other cities there were which delivered themselves up to the king of Assyria. Accordingly, when the Tyrians would not submit to him, the king returned, and fell upon them again, while the Phenicians had furnished him with threescore ships, and eight hundred men to row them ; and when the Tyrians had come upon them in twelve ships, and the enemies' ships were dispersed, they took five hundred men prisoners, and the reputation of all the citizens of Tyre was thereby increased : but the king of Assyria returned, and placed guards at their rivers and aqueducts, who

According to the Assyrian Eponym list Shalmaneser was at home in 726 B.C. Therefore a five years' siege begun by him could only have been completed in the reign of Sargon II (acc. 722 B.C.). In recent years there has been a tendency to suggest that this expedition really took place in the reign of Sennacherib. Professor R. W. Rogers¹ says that "We have no allusion to any such siege in any of the inscription material we possess. . . . If he had really besieged Tyre and left this siege also as an inheritance to his successor, we should almost certainly find it mentioned in the abundant historical material of the next reign." This however appears to be an oversight, for I have found a reference. Sargon II in his cylinder inscription line 21 says that he pacified the land of Cilicia and the city of Tyre.² This confirms Josephus, and the absence of boast suggests that the Assyrians completely failed to reduce the island.

It follows therefore that the account given by Josephus should be accepted as historical. Now we know that Tyre often refers to the mainland city. We shall see instances of this in Sennacherib and Ezekiel. Thus the predictions of Amos and Zechariah ix. were literally fulfilled.

With Sennacherib, we get further information which bears on Isaiah's prophecy. Luli or Elulaeus was still king of Tyre and Sidon and the Taylor Prism³ gives a narrative of his campaign.

should hinder the Tyrians from drawing water. This continued for five years, and still [the] Tyrians bore the siege, and drank of the water they had out of the wells they dug.' And this is what is written in the Tyrian archives concerning Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria." (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*. Translated by William Whiston. IX, xiv, §2, 283 ff.) On these expeditions of Shalmaneser see pp. 31, 34.

¹ *History*, ii. p. 309.

² D. G. Lyon, *Keilschrifttexte Sargons* [1883], p. 33.

³ Cited above, pp. 46 f. According to another inscription, "(48) I Sennacherib (49) the king of hosts, the king of Assyria, (50) to carry out that work according to the will of the gods (51) I turned my mind and directed my attention. (52) And the peoples of Chaldea, the Arameans, the Mannai, (53) The men of Kue and Cilicia, the Philistines and Tyrians, (54) Who had not submitted to my yoke, (55) I carried away, and I set them to forced labour (56)

Sennacherib was thus in a position to carry away the Tyrians who had not submitted to his yoke. It is clear that he refers to a conquest of mainland not island Tyre.

Esarhaddon (680-668 B.C.) conquered Sidon. He calls himself "the conqueror of the city of Sidon which lies in the midst of the sea; he who overwhelmed all its houses; its walls, its dwellings I tore down, cast them into the sea, and made the place where they stood a ruin. Abdmilkot its king, who had fled into the sea before my arms, I drew him like a fish out of the sea and cut off his head. . . . Its people without number, cattle and sheep, asses I carried away to Assyria."¹

In the year 670, however, he says, "In the course of my campaign I erected siege works against Ba'al, king of Tyre, who had trusted in Tarqu, king of Kush, his friend, and had shaken off the yoke of Ashur, my lord, and had expressed defiance of me, I cut off from him food and drink, the means of life."²

Ashurbanipal (668-626 B.C.) makes the following statement:

"In my third campaign I marched against Baal, King of Tyre, who dwelt in the midst of the sea. Because he had not kept the word of my lordship nor heeded the utterance of my lips, I erected against him siege-works and cut off his exit both by land and sea; their lives I made narrow and straitened; I caused them to submit to my yoke. They brought the daughters that came forth from his loins and the daughters of his brothers into my presence to become concubines. Yahimilhi, his son, who had never crossed the sea, they brought at the same time to do me service. His daughter and the daughters of his brothers with an abundant dowry I received from him. I granted him favour and returned to him the son that came forth from his loins."³

The date of this inscription is uncertain, Rogers⁴ makes it about 645 B.C.

and they made bricks. (Cylinder No. 103000 col. V. *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets, etc., in the British Museum*, Part XXVI. p. 22. This cylinder gives an account of Sennacherib's principal achievements up to the summer of the year 694 B.C.)

¹ Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, pp. 353 f., Prism A.

² Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 358 (12-14).

³ G. A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, 2nd edition [1917], p. 378.

⁴ *Cuneiform Parallels*, 359.

Prof. Rogers ¹ points out that though the fall of Tyre is described as the third campaign of the king, Baal contributed troops to the expedition against Egypt in 668 B.C. Whether he is right in regarding Ashurbanipal's siege as the continuation of Esarhaddon's may be questioned.² The facts suggest that Baal patched up a submission as the result of the earlier campaign, and subsequently revolted in Ashurbanipal's second or third year. We find an Assyrian governor of Tyre in 648 B.C.³ which shows that at that date a city of the name of Tyre had lost its independence. But with regard to many of the items in this involved story doubt is possible as to whether the island or the continental city suffered.

There is at first a semblance of difficulty in deciding as to Isaiah xxiii. because Sennacherib's campaigns partly fit the prophecy. "Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Kittim; even there thou shalt have no rest," is strikingly illustrated by the Taylor prism's statement of Luli, king of Sidon, "he fled far away into the sea and died," but it finds an even better illustration in Esarhaddon's "Abd-milkot its king, who had fled into the sea before my arms, I drew him like a fish out of the sea and cut off his head." The text of verse 13 is very doubtful, but the Greek seems to have thought that it spoke of a devastation of the land of the Chaldeans by the Assyrians. It is natural to refer this to the campaigns of Sennacherib, but it should be noted that Esarhaddon and to some extent Ashurbanipal also chastised them.⁴ When the chapter is read as a whole it cannot be doubted that it is to the campaigns of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal that the prophet looks. As we have seen, Tyre lost her independence and was placed under an Assyrian governor. Assyria subsequently lost the whole of the West. The prophet looks forward to this and foretells that Tyre will revive and that her commerce will be in Jewish hands (15 ff.). "Seventy

¹ *History* ii. p. 437.

² Cp. M. Streck, *Assurbanipal und die Letzten Assyrischen Könige* I [1916], p. CCCLXIX note.

³ C. H. W. Johns, *Assyrian Deeds and Documents* II [1901], p. 137.

⁴ Rogers, *History* ii. 396-8, 451 f.

years," the period of her eclipse, is, of course, a non-arithmetical number.

That Tyre did revive is abundantly attested by the subsequent history. Whether her commerce was in Jewish hands is not known, but in view of the extent of the commercial diaspora ¹ there seems to be no improbability. This oracle was presumably written after Sennacherib's campaign.

Joel iv. (E.V. iii.) 4-8 is left out of account because of the uncertainty as to the date of the book of Joel.

Jeremiah xxvii. 2-8 urges the Phœnicians to submit to Nebuchadrezzar. Alternatively they will have to pay the penalty. Ezekiel, however, goes much further. In the eleventh year, i.e. 587 B.C., the year of the fall of Jerusalem, he prophesies the complete destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadrezzar (xxvi.-xxviii. 19), "And I will make thee a bare rock: thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets; thou shalt be built no more: for I the Lord have spoken it, saith the Lord God" (xxvi. 14). The island city submitted after a siege of thirteen years 585-573 B.C. as we now know from contract tablets,² but was not destroyed. It was not, however, for the island that Ezekiel prophesied destruction, though to a modern reader this appears at first sight to be so. But the prophet was the child of his country and age, and the language he used must be interpreted in the light of this fact. As we have seen Esarhaddon speaks of "the city of Sidon, which lies in the midst of the sea." As Sidon was a mainland town, this expression must have been a contemporary phrase for a seaport, or as we should say "on the sea." When therefore Ezekiel uses the same idiom of Tyre he presumably means nothing more than on the sea. This might refer to the island or to the mainland city and is indecisive in its meaning, but he has used language which is wholly unambiguous, "For thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will bring upon Tyre Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and a company, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make forts against thee, and cast

¹ See pp. 169 f

² Rogers, *Hist.* ii. 527.

up a mount against thee, and raise up the buckler against thee. And he shall set his battering engines against thy walls and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wagons, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people with the sword, and the pillars of thy strength shall go down to the ground" (xxvi. 7-11). This is absolutely impossible of an island. No man could have supposed that anybody could attack it with horses and chariots, cast forts against it, set up land engines of war against its walls or break down its towers with the sword of an army. Nor could the abundance of the invader's horses cover an island with dust, any more than they would enable him to enter its gates as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. It follows that the case against Ezekiel here breaks down hopelessly. What the prophet foretold came to pass. The mainland Tyre has apparently remained uninhabited from that day to this, and the flourishing city that Alexander attacked was situate on the island site. Kuenen, however, lays stress on Ezekiel xxix. 18, "Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyre: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, from Tyre, for the service that he had served against it." He thinks this means that Tyre did not fall. But that is not what the prophet's language suggests. "No wages" implies an absence of money. After thirteen years of the blockade the island kingdom was naturally too exhausted to be a lucrative conquest when it was compelled to submit. Thus, so far from discrediting the prophet, the history of twenty-four centuries is there to testify to the reality of his supernatural inspiration. That mainland Tyre would not arise again if captured was very improbable having regard alike to its own previous history, the frequency (attested by archaeology) with which old cities were rebuilt, and its important commercial position.

Kuenen¹ endeavours to discredit Jeremiah by referring to a prophecy against Damascus which he assumes to relate to Nebuchadrezzar. Here is the oracle: "Of Damascus. Hamath is ashamed, and Arpad; for they have heard evil tidings, they are melted away: there is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet; Damascus is waxed feeble, she turneth herself to flee, and trembling hath seized on her: anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her, as of a woman in travail. How is the city of praise not forsaken, the city of my joy? Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be brought to silence in that day, saith the Lord of hosts. And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad" (Jer. xlix. 23-27). We have no information whatever as to the history of Damascus during this period and for long after. For all we know the prophecy may have been fulfilled not once but a dozen times. Kuenen however lays stress on the words, "how is the city of praise not left, the city of my joy." He interprets them to mean "that the capture of the city would have, as its result, its permanent dissolution" which, of course, is in conflict with the fact that it is still a flourishing place. But this is simply reading into Jeremiah's expressions something that is not there. They would be satisfied by events of an entirely different order, such as a flight from the city of women and children and old men on the approach of an enemy. This is the most natural interpretation having regard to verse 24, "she turneth herself to flee," and the fact that in spite of her being forsaken, verse 26 foretells that her young men shall fall in her streets, which would have been impossible after a permanent desolation of the city. In this case therefore the attack rests on nothing more solid than a piece of fantastic exegesis. We know from the published inscriptions of Nebuchadrezzar that he committed atrocities in this region,² and nothing is more likely than that Damascus had cause to regret one of the campaigns of the period.

We come now to Moab and Ammon. The predictions of Amos touching these peoples, as also Isaiah xv f., are

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 111 f.

² See the quotation on p. 125.

discussed elsewhere.¹ For the rest several entirely different events are foretold by the prophets. Isaiah xxv. 10-12 and Jeremiah xlviii. foretell the fate meted out to Moab by Nebuchadrezzar, and Jeremiah xlix. 1-6 deals with his treatment of Ammon. We know from the inscription of Cyrus (quoted below, p. 98) that the returns prophesied by Jeremiah actually took place in the case of all nations deported. While we have no actual record of the Chaldean conquest of these tribes we know that they subjugated the whole of the country. Further, Ezekiel xxi. 25 f. (20 f.) shows that the Chaldeans were at war with Ammon at a time when they were conducting hostilities against Jerusalem. There is thus absolutely no reason to doubt that the predictions were fulfilled.

Ezekiel xxv. 1-7 ; xxi. 33-37 (28-32) and xxv. 8-11 are perfectly clear predictions of the end of Ammon and Moab respectively at the hands of the sons of the East. Isaiah xi. 14 and Zephaniah ii. 9b predict the Maccabean successes.² On the other hand Zephaniah ii. 8, 9a may refer either to these or perhaps to the state into which these countries ultimately fell. The following quotations from two writers who cannot be suspected of any sympathy with supernaturalism are decisive as to the fulfilment of these predictions :

" Nearly three hundred years later the Ammonites (Timotheus) are among the enemies defeated by Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc. v. 6-18). . . . Up to this time, then, Ezekiel's threat (Ezek. xxv.) against the Ammonites . . . had not been fulfilled. . . . Their fate, however, cannot have been very long delayed. In the fifth century B.C. we already find 'Arabians' among the enemies of Nehemiah (Neh. ii. 19, iv. 7 [1]), and we can hardly doubt that by degrees the Ammonites, like the Moabites before them, had to amalgamate with the land-hungry intruders." ³

" The Edomites gave way before the pressure of the land-hungry nomads, and settled in the desolate country of Judah ; the children of Lot, on the other hand, appear to have amalgamated with them—the Ammonites maintaining their individuality longer than the Moabites, who soon entirely disappeared." ⁴

This leads us to the predictions as to Edom. Obadiah,

¹ See pp. 38, 107.

² See pp. 18, 101 f.

³ T. K. Cheyne, *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, col. 144.

⁴ J. Wellhausen, *Enc. Bibl.*, col. 3177.

Amos i. 11 f. and Isaiah xxi. 11 f.¹ are considered elsewhere. Joel iv. (iii) 19 foretells the desolation of the country which is a fact that cannot be disputed: Judah and Jerusalem have been inhabited continuously from the end of the exile.

We next come to an event which is attested by Ezekiel alone. In xxxii. 18-32 he utters a prophecy against Egypt and depicts Pharaoh's reception in Sheol. He will see there various powers that have already met with the fate that the prophet sees overtaking him. These are Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom, the princes of the north including the Zidonians (who had then recently suffered at the hands of Nebuchadrezzar). Thus it is clear that Edom had already met with disaster when Ezekiel composed this oracle, i.e. in the year following the fall of Jerusalem. It is to this that Jeremiah xxv. 21, xxvii. 3 (certainly) and Ezekiel xxv. 12-14, xxxvi. 1-15 (probably) refer. There seems to have been some further calamity which Malachi i. 2-4 mentions and the Edomites were at some time driven to settle in the south of Judah. Their land certainly became a waste. Thus Isaiah xxxiv. was entirely fulfilled. The reference in Isaiah lxiii. is too vague for certainty. With regard to Jeremiah xlix. 7-22 and Ezekiel xxxv. doubt is permissible. The prophets may have been foretelling Nebuchadrezzar's attack, or they may have composed these oracles subsequently and looked to a more remote future, or they may have been thinking of both events. The difficulty is not that the predictions remained unfulfilled but that more than one event would substantially satisfy the forecasts.

Isaiah xix. is a passage of extreme difficulty. It begins with a prediction (vers. 1-17) which standing by itself might refer either to Shabaka, who was certainly a cruel lord, or to Esarhaddon who conquered Egypt in 670 B.C. or his son Ashurbanipal who continued the conquest. In view of the prophet's general attitude towards Assyria, it is difficult to believe that xix. 1 does not look to that country, and in 23 f. there are definite references to Assyria.² The Assyrians divided the land into twenty-two nomes under native princes and set Necho of Sais over them as chief king subject to the Assyrians. Native levies aided

¹ See pp. 18, 37 ff., 107.

² See Appendix II.

Ashurbanipal. Egyptians were stirred up against Egyptians. Memphis (the Noph of ver. 13) was plundered and destroyed. From the temples fifty-five royal statues were carried away. It was in this expedition that Manasseh co-operated.¹ Judah became a terror unto Egypt. If now, we look at the rest of the chapter, we are struck with the fact that the natural translation of verse 23 (end) is "and the Egyptians shall serve the Assyrians." That also came true. Further it is foretold that there would be five cities speaking Hebrew and worshipping the Lord. Commentators have pointed to the fact that this is a very small number out of the Egyptian total of some 20,000 cities. Is it not natural to suppose that the reference is to Jewish colonies, possibly sanctioned by the Assyrians as a reward to their vassal (of course at the expense of the Egyptians) for his dutiful service? The saviour who delivered Egypt was Psamtik I. "When in 640 B.C. peace at last settled upon the Assyrian Empire, Psamtik's movement had gone too far and Ashurbanipal evidently did not care to risk opposing it."²

One thing Isaiah does not mean, viz. that Egypt will be converted to Judaism, for he expressly limits the worship to five cities only. But he does contemplate that the Egyptians will seek the Lord's help and sacrifice to Him. There may well have been an attempt by the Egyptians to secure the aid of the Jewish colonies and of that God who had been strong enough to save Jerusalem from the fate that Memphis and Thebes had undergone. The Elephantine papyri state that "from the days of the kings of Egypt our fathers built this temple in Yeb."³ There seems no reason to doubt that the Egyptians may have found it advisable in an age in which they had to rely largely on foreign mercenaries to make concessions to the Jews and their religion. The result of this is to secure a position in which with God's help the Egyptians recover their independence and live peacefully by the side of Judah and Assyria.

¹ See p. 58.

² Breasted, *History*, p. 566.

³ The authenticity of the papyri is doubted by some authorities, and the matter is still *sub judice*. But the argument in the next sentence holds good in either case.

Kuenen makes no point on Joel iv. (iii.) 19, but he lays great stress on the supposed nonfulfilment of the oracles of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. He relied on Herodotus alone, but we have before us inscriptional material which supplements the Greek account and vindicates the prophets. What in fact happened was as follows :

Amasis began to reign in 569 B.C. In his third year Hophra (Apries), who had been dethroned by him, gathered an army of Greeks. According to an inscription on a stela, "They are wasting all Egypt . . . and those who are of thy party flee because of them."¹ Subsequently there was a great battle in which Amasis triumphed. The following is an extract from the stela recording later events.

"Year 3, third month of the first season (third month), day 8 came one to say to his Majesty : 'The enemy infest the ways, there are thousands there, invading the land ; they cover every road. As for those who are in the ships, they bear hatred of thee in their hearts without ceasing.'"²

According to Herodotus ii. 169 Amasis was put to death by his Egyptian enemies.

Then came Nebuchadrezzar's campaign of which Professor King writes as follows :—

"Of his later campaigns nothing has yet been published, beyond a fragmentary reference to a conflict with Amasis of Egypt in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. Though we do not know the circumstances under which it took place we may assume that the Babylonian army was again victorious against the Egyptian troops and the Greek mercenaries who fought in their ranks. A tradition is indeed preserved by Josephus that Nebuchadnezzar made Egypt a Babylonian province, and although this is certainly an exaggeration, the evidence suggests that he may well have conducted at least one successful campaign on Egyptian territory. The troubles of Apries in consequence of his ill-advised expedition against Cyrene, and followed by the revolt of Amasis and his own deposition and death, may well have furnished the occasion for a successful invasion of the country by Nebuchadnezzar."³

Here is the inscription of the campaign in 567 B.C.

(13) In the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon (14) [the kings of] Egypt came up to do battle (15) and Amasis, king of Egypt called out his troops, (16) and . . . cu of the city of Budu-Yaman

¹ J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records* IV. (1906), p. 511.

² *Ibid.*, p. 512.

³ L. W. King, *Hist. of Babylon*, p. 278.

. . . (17) [and others from (?)] far-away regions in the sea (18) . . . numerous troops (?) which were in Egypt (19) . . . arms and horses. . . . (20) . . . to his aid he called (21) . . . and before him (22) to make [war (?)] he trusted. (23) . . . their design (24) he accomplished their defeat (?) and (25) . . . (26) the destruction. . . .¹

Fragmentary as this inscription is, it warrants two observations. Nebuchadrezzar did in fact make the Egyptian campaign as foretold and he defeated the Egyptians, otherwise he would never have chronicled the battle in this way. Later the Egypt of Amasis was prosperous.

It will be observed that Jeremiah predicted some of these events with the minutest accuracy of detail (xlvi. 13-26; xliii. 8-13; xlv. 12-14, 26-30). We have no information as to some of the incidents foretold in these prophecies, but where we know the facts they tally precisely. "And this shall be the sign unto you, saith the Lord, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that My words shall surely stand against you for evil: thus saith the Lord: Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra, King of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life" (xlv. 29 f.). It will be seen that the murder of Hophra by his enemies did in the event precede the invasion of Nebuchadrezzar and that Jeremiah clearly realised that Hophra would fall by the hand of enemies other than the King of Babylon. This is shown by the antithesis between "into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of them that seek his life" used in this case and the expressions applied to Zedekiah "into the hand of *Nebuchadrezzar*, etc." Similarly with his phraseology in xlv. 26. Pharaoh and some of his followers were delivered "into the hand of those that sought their lives," others "into the hand of *Nebuchadrezzar*," and subsequently Egypt was "inhabited as in the days of old." Kuenen² is quite right in saying that "Hophra did *not* fall in the war against *Nebuchadrezzar*," but this is precisely what Jeremiah predicted. The prophet foretold that his death at the hand of his enemies

¹ R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 367.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 124.

would precede the war, and so it did. It seems however unnecessary to follow up Kuenen's theories and reasoning once the facts are established.

In turning to Ezekiel xxix.-xxxii. we note one phenomenon at once. The language used is far more figurative and hyperbolic. For instance, "and I will make the rivers dry" in xxx. 12 is probably not to be taken literally. With reservations of this kind Ezekiel's predictions appear to have been fulfilled. The Egyptian inscription quoted above proves that in fact the land of Egypt was made a desolation and a waste as the result of the fighting between Hophra and his auxiliaries and Amasis. Moreover there seems to be a distinct reference to the part played by ships in the phrase "because he hath said, The river is mine and I have made it." The meaning appears to be that devastation shall come to Egypt through the utilisation of the very river which is its reliance. Certainly it cannot be maintained that the whole of Egypt was a waste for forty years; but the expression "forty years" is rarely to be taken arithmetically. It is well known¹ that this is merely an indefinite phrase of time. There may moreover be an element of hyperbole in the language used. It is very remarkable indeed that Ezekiel prophesies a captivity and return (xxix. 12 f.). The captivity is not so strange, for it was a frequent result of successful invasion. But the return could only be foretold with supernatural aid, for, as we shall see,² all the captive peoples were allowed to return by Cyrus in 538 B.C. This oracle dates from the tenth year of Ezekiel's captivity, 588 B.C. There was then no apparent chance of an overthrow of Babylon by Persia half a century later and a complete reversal of the Chaldean policy by the Persian king. Further, shortly afterwards, Egypt was conquered by Cambyses and lost her independence, 525 B.C. (vers. 14 f.). While therefore there may be an element of poetic licence in the actual phraseology used we know that in substance and in many details the predictions were fulfilled.

In this connection it must be pointed out that it is mainly

¹ See e.g. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*. S.V. Number.

² See p. 98.

on the prophecies relating to Tyre and Egypt that Kuenen relies to discredit Ezekiel. "Is it not exceedingly singular that God has left His prophet in ignorance of matters so important as the conquest of Tyre by Nebuchadrezzar, and the issue of that monarch's wars against Egypt, and at the same time has revealed to him the fact that Zedekiah would be deprived of sight, and the day on which the siege of Jerusalem should begin?"¹ We now see that it was not Ezekiel who was left ignorant of these important matters.

Kuenen next deals with the Assyrians. We have already treated of Isaiah xix. and Micah v. 4 f.² It has also been shown above that the prophecies of Nahum and Zephaniah as to Nineveh were fulfilled.³ Kuenen indeed tries to discredit the oracles by pointing out that Nineveh lingered on for some time. To this there are two answers. It fell as an imperial city once for all, and the total ruin which ultimately ensued was the direct consequence of its fall. And secondly the treatment of time in the prophets is, as we shall see hereafter,⁴ subject to special laws.

The prophecy against Babylon in Isaiah xxi. 1-10 is not difficult to locate in the present state of our knowledge. The reference to the Negeb (E.V. South) or dry country in the south of Judaea points to the prophecy's having been composed in Judah. The prediction of 9 "all the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground" will not fit most of the occasions on which Babylon fell. Generally the conquerors were disposed like Cyrus to win the favour of the gods, their priests and their worshippers rather than to incur their hostility. There is only one fall of Babylon to which this language is appropriate, and that is its capture by Sennacherib in 689 B.C. But here we suddenly find an extraordinary parallel between the Assyrian description and the prophecy.

In my second expedition to Babylon, which I went forth to capture, I saw the destruction of its power. I went and like the coming of storms I poured out (my men); like a rushing wind I swept it. The city of Niti I besieged and by fire and rebellion the hands . . . (one) of its people, small and great, I did not leave, and

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 324.

² See pp. 62 f.

³ See pp. 75 f., 45 f.

⁴ On pp. 146 ff.

their corpses the streets of the city filled. To save the life of the king of Babylon, himself, his family . . . alive to the midst of my country I took him. The valuables of that city I destroyed. Gold precious stones, furniture, valuables, to the hands (of my men) I distributed and to the place of their army they returned. The gods dwelling within it, the hands of my men captured them and broke (them) and (their furniture) and valuables they brought out, Rimmon and Sala the gods of the temples ; which Marduk-Nadin-Akhi, King of Akkad, in the time of Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, had brought out and to Babylon had taken for 418 years ; from Babylon I caused to come forth and to the temples to their places I restored them. The city and houses from its foundation to its upper chambers I destroyed, dug up, in the fire I burnt. The fortress and outer wall, the temples of the gods, the tower of brick-work, the houses ; all there was I captured it and in the river Arakhti I placed. In the stronghold of that city that multitude I shut up ; and its ashes into the water I swept away ; the fixing of its foundations I destroyed and over it like a heap of corn its (ruins) I caused to turn. In after days the ground of that city and the houses of the gods (which were) unrequired into the waters I swept it and I made an end with power.¹

Compare this with Isaiah xxi. 1, 9, " As whirlwinds in the Negeb sweep through, it cometh from the wilderness, from a terrible land. . . . And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen ; and all the graven images of her gods are broken unto the ground." And the details given by Sennacherib assuredly justify the prophet's words in 3 f. " Therefore are my loins filled with anguish ; pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman in travail : I am pained so that I cannot hear ; I am dismayed so that I cannot see. My heart panteth, horror hath affrighted me : the twilight that I desired hath been turned into trembling unto me."

One objection has been taken to this. Stress is laid on the words, " Go up Elam " in verse 2 and it is said that Elam was on the side of Babylon. This is an error. It had fought for Babylon in the preceding year but Against Umman-Minanu, King of Elam, and the King of Babylon, with the many kings of the mountains and the sea, who were their helpers, in sight of the city of Khalulê I placed my line of battle. By command of Ashur, Lord of the great, my Lord, cutting through (their) ranks I drove. Into their midst I went and an overthrow of their armies I made : their army I did destroy, and I marched against their country. The great men of the King of Elam, with

¹ The Bavarian Inscription of Sennacherib, lines 43-54, *Records of the Past*, ix. pp. 27 f.

Nabu-Zikir-Iskun, son of Merodach-Baladan, King of Gan-Dunyas, alive within the battle my hands captured. The King of Elam and the King of Babylon, the overwhelming number of my strong army destroyed them and in their chariots they abandoned their people; to save their lives (to) their country they fled and they returned not. Afterwards the King peace to Sennacherib, King of Assyria, speedily sent and to Elam fixed the return. Terrible fear against the country of Elam (over) all of them was poured, and their country they forsook, to save their lives like an eagle. A difficult mountain they (ascended) and like to a šusudi bird I turned, and their hearts for battle failing them, the mountain pass they opened not, and they did not make battle.¹

Sennacherib does not say that it was one of the terms of peace that Elam should send auxiliaries to assist him, but we have seen how his armies were composed.² Media appears at this time to have been partly incorporated in the Assyrian dominions and the rest of that country was subject to Sennacherib's suzerainty.³

The phenomena of Isaiah xiii. i-xiv. 23 are complicated. The oracle is expressly attributed to Isaiah son of Amoz in xiii. i. When we examine it closely we find that it contains a number of elements that were literally fulfilled in 689 B.C. when Sennacherib took Babylon, *but not* at the time of the capture by Cyrus. Side by side with these are other elements which seem to point to exilic authorship. If the oracle were confined to chapter xiii. there would be no ground at all for questioning the attribution to Isaiah. History has shown that in the latter part of his life "her time was near to come and her days were not to be prolonged" (ver. 22). There was "a tumult of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together" (ver. 4). A day of the Lord came, cruel with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation (ver. 9). A man was made more rare than fine gold (12). Indeed it is unnecessary to go through the chapter verse by verse. It is only necessary to correct the English version of verse 20 and translate the Hebrew literally "it shall not *dwell* for ever nor *remain* from generation to generation" to obtain a prophecy which, if Isaiah's, was fulfilled absolutely in all

¹ The Bavian Inscription, lines 34-43, *Records of the Past*, ix. pp. 26 f.

² See p. 52.

³ Rogers, *History*, ii. 324-6, 332.

respects. "I made an end with power," says Sennacherib, and he did. Even the foundations were destroyed so that the later Babylon was not the same city. It may be that originally the prophet mentioned some other people besides the Medes in verse 17 and the prophecy may have undergone some modification as the result of a process we have yet to study.

It is otherwise with xiv. 1-23. It is true that there was a return of the northern tribes as the result of a fall of Babylon and that Isaiah foretold such a return. Yet he could scarcely have written xiv. 1, "For the Lord will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land," for the return was *not* the result of the events of 689 B.C. to which xiii. refers but of those of 538 B.C. Again the song of triumph in xiv. 4 ff. fits the empire founded by Nebuchadrezzar, but not the Babylon of Isaiah's time to which alone he could refer in the terms of xiii. 22. It was under Nebuchadrezzar and his successors that the Chaldean oppression was felt (xiv. 4-6); his treatment of the Lebanon is the subject of verse 8; the huge pretensions that are held up to scorn in 12 ff. all apply only to the later period. There is a reference to the Babylonian *corvée* in xiv. 3. The Chaldean monarchs carried out great building programmes and they resorted to the device of forced labour just as did the Pharaohs of Egypt and the kings of Israel and Assyria. Nebuchadrezzar, for instance, used it in Babylon, and for the purpose of building the temple of Sin in Harran Nabonidus brought men from as far off as Gaza.¹

Yet Isaiah xiv. 23 strongly recalls 689 B.C. "I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts." "Pools of water" and "the besom of destruction" exactly fit this year. With this and Isaiah xiii. we may compare the words of Prof. Rogers.

"The Babylonians had now no Elamite allies, and the city was soon taken. Thereupon ensued one of the wildest scenes of human folly in all history. The city was treated exactly as the Assyrian kings had been accustomed to

¹ S. Langdon, *Die Neubabylonischen Königsinschriften*, pp. 147, 221.

treat insignificant villages which had joined in rebellion. It was plundered, its inhabitants driven from their homes or deported, its walls broken down. The torch was then applied, and over the plain rolled the smoke of consuming temples and palaces, the fruit of centuries of high civilisation. All that the art of man had up to that time devised of beauty and of glory, of majesty and of massiveness, lay in one great smouldering ruin. Over this the waters of the Euphrates were diverted that the site of antiquity's greatest city might be turned into a pestilential swamp."¹

There is one other element in Isaiah xiii f. that must be mentioned. It is at least possible that the prophet like Jeremiah looked forward to the ultimate desertion of Babylon. This was still centuries ahead to whatever date the present form of the oracle is assigned and should therefore be left for consideration with other peculiarities of the prophetic treatment of the time element.² For the accuracy of the forecast and a curious parallel to the foreshortening of time the words used by Prof. Rogers of its fall in 538 may be quoted. "It was in other hands now, and it would soon be a shapeless mass of ruins, standing alone in a sad, untilled desert."³

At this point attention must be given to a phenomenon which makes it easy to solve the difficulties. It was common for the prophets to quote and adapt older oracles. For instance, Obadiah 1-9 and Jeremiah xlix. 7 ff. are so much alike that they cannot be entirely independent. Either one prophet is quoting and adapting the other or else both are quoting and adapting an older oracle. Suppose, now, that the title and ascription of the original oracle had been quoted by the adapter or adapters. In that case we should have had phenomena exactly parallel to those of Isaiah xiii. f.—an oracle given at one time by a prophet whose name remained attached to it adapted by another prophet to the circumstances of his own prophecy. If the original and the adaptation both dated from the same age, there would be no conflict. But this will not always have been so. Thus Jeremiah xlviii. uses

¹ R. W. Rogers, *History* ii. p. 381.

² See pp. 145 ff.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 576.

some material found in Numbers xxi. and much more from Isaiah xv. f. Isaiah's own example in this matter is very instructive. He quotes an older oracle. Then he says that within three years Moab would meet with misfortune, but he particularly does *not* say that this would be the fulfilment of the older oracle (xvi. 14) and we are left in doubt whether he regarded the calamity he foretold in that light or merely as an instalment. Perhaps xvi. 5 supplies the answer. "And a throne shall be established in mercy, and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David; judging, and seeking judgment, and swift to do righteousness." That is a reference to Hezekiah, so that the misfortune that befell Moab at the hands of Assyria in 713 B.C.¹ during that king's reign was probably the event to which the earlier prophet referred. If that be so, Jeremiah, writing probably more than a century after the original oracle had been fulfilled, adapted portions of it to a new disaster that he foresaw. It is unnecessary to multiply examples. In view of this practice it is easy to understand that an oracle of Isaiah's predicting the fall of Babylon in 689 B.C. was adapted by a later prophet in the exile. Isaiah's name is prefixed to the final composition because it in fact contains some of his work.

It therefore seems most probable that what has really happened is that an oracle of Isaiah's foretelling the events of 689 B.C. was quoted, possibly with some modifications, by an exilic prophet, and applied to the fall of Babylon which he foresaw for 538 B.C.

That Habakkuk's predictions as to Babylon were fulfilled cannot be disputed and is virtually admitted by Kuenen.²

Another prophet foretold the fall of Babylon to the Persians with great accuracy (Isa. xl.-lxvi. *passim*, see especially xlv. xlvii.). Here is the account of the Nabonidus Chronicle.

12. ". . . In the month Tammuz Cyrus battle in Rutum against . . . 13. of the river Nizallat to the midst of the army of Akkad then made. The men of Akkad 14. a revolt raised. The soldiers on the 14th day Sipar without fighting took. 15. Nabonidus fled. On the 16th day Gobryas governor of the land of Gutium and the

¹ See p. 38.

² *Op. cit.* p. 137.

army of Cyrus without fighting 16. to Babylon descended. Afterwards Nabonidus when he had bound [him], into Babylon he took [him]. At the end of the month Tammuz the rebels 17. of Gutium the gates of E-saggil closed (but) for its defence nothing in E-saggil and the temples of the country 18. was placed and a weapon not then there was.¹

By the side of this may be set the following oracle : " Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings ; to open the doors before him, and the gates shall not be shut ; I will go before thee, and make the rugged places plain : I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron " (Isa. xlv. 1 f.). That the doors were opened appears from the inscription. But a further question arises which we shall meet again in considering Jeremiah l. f. Is the latter part of verse 2 to be regarded as mere poetical embellishment, or does it mean that after the fall of the city the Persians will demolish the gates ? Either view is possible on our present knowledge.

There is, however, another chapter to which attention must be directed in this connection, viz. Isaiah lxvi. The natural interpretation of this is as follows : The more powerful section of the community in Babylon desired to build a local temple. A relatively poor and faithful minority strongly opposed this out of religious and patriotic considerations. The pro-temple party cast them out of the community. The patriots, to whom the prophet belonged, complained bitterly and asserted their religion. " For Thou art our father, though Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us : Thou, O Lord, art our father ; our redeemer from everlasting is Thy name " (lxiii. 16). They charged their opponents with irreligion (lxiv. 6 (7)) and worse (lxv.). Probably other deities too were to be worshipped in the proposed local temple and the prophet promises restoration and happiness to the faithful, destruction to their enemies (lxv. 8-15). Then he protests emphatically against the whole scheme

¹ Nabonidus Chronicle Reverse 12-18, *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, Vol. VII., pp. 141 f., translation by T. G. Pinches.

of having such a temple and denounces its sacrifices in scathing terms (lxvi. 1-4). Turning to the patriotic party he proceeds, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word: Your brethren that hate you, that cast you out for My name's sake, have said, Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy; but they shall be ashamed." The next verse appears to me to deal with the taking of Babylon. It is the happenings in connection with the great temple of Esagil that he seems to predict. "A voice of tumult from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to His enemies" (ver. 6). Then the prophet paints the glorious results for the holy land and gives the patriots the promise of verse 13. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." The vision of the glories of the future is mingled with a picture of the latter end of the faithless.

We now come to the questions raised by Jeremiah l. f.¹

¹ Driver (*op. cit.* pp. 266 f.) denies the authenticity of Jeremiah l. li. It will be well to begin with the second of his reasons. "The point of view is not that of Jeremiah either in or about the year 593. At that time, as we know from chapters xxvii.-xxix., Jeremiah was opposing earnestly the prophets who were promising that shortly Babylon would fall, and the exiles be restored; he was even (chap. xxix.) exhorting the exiles to settle down contentedly in their new home. But the prophet who speaks in chapters l.-li., so far from counselling patience, uses all the arts of language for the purpose of inspiring the exiled with the hopes of a speedy release, for doing which the "false prophets" were so severely denounced by Jeremiah. The line of thought adopted in the prophecy is thus inconsistent with the attitude of Jeremiah in B.C. 593." In the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (Jer. xxv. 1), Jeremiah prophesied a seventy years' supremacy for Babylon (ver. 11). He added the following words, "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it desolate for ever. And I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations" (12-13).

Therefore at a much earlier date than that contemplated by Driver, the prophet had already adopted the line of thought deemed impossible for 593, simultaneously with the announcement of a complete triumph for Babylonia over all opponents and desolations for "the whole land" (ver. 11). The Hebrew is supported by the

As so often there is a grouping of events separated in time. The desolation of Babylon is spoken of as well as its fall to the Persians centuries earlier (e.g. l. 13, 26 ; li. 25 ff. 62, etc.).¹ There are other points that call for notice. Jeremiah seems in part to be using older oracles, for the resemblance of l. 39 f. to Isaiah xiii. 21 f. 19 is very marked. But other expressions point to the Babylon of Nebuchadrezzar and no other. Thus in li. 25 we read, "O destroying mountain." "Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her saith the Lord" (li. 53). This accords with the facts.

"Between the two city walls, and between the Euphrates and the Ishtar gate, Nebuchadrezzar placed a great artificial platform of brick laid in bitumen. Upon this elevated plateau was then erected a citadel, which was connected

LXX which so often differs from it in this book. Then follows a description of how all the nations are made to drink the cup of the wine of fury, and in 26 (LXX, xxxii. 12) we read "and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them." "Sheshach" is Babylon (li. 41, where the phrase is omitted by the LXX, xxviii. 41), but the clause is omitted by the LXX. Driver is compelled to deny the authenticity not merely of xxv. 26b but also of xxv. 11-14 (p. 260) in order to reject l.-li. As usual there is no evidence to support his view. If now we turn to l. we are struck by the words "In those days and in that time" in 4, 20 and by "this Nebuchadnezzar" in verse 17 (LXX omits Nebuchadnezzar but has "this man" xxvii. 17). Both of these point to an early date. In li. 7 (LXX, xxviii. 7) the image of the cup is resumed from xxv. 15 ff. : "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken : the nations have drunk of her wine ; therefore the nations are mad" (ver. 7). Driver's other points are negligible. He lays stress on the vein of strong feeling against Babylon which pervades the prophecy. It is well to remember that the critic wrote at a time when his country was enjoying profound peace and had not been involved in a really serious struggle since Waterloo. The present generation at any rate will be likely to have more insight into an emotional and patriotic temperament. His other contentions rest simply on the principle that a prophet only predicted in accordance with the immediate circumstances of his time. We have already seen what reliance can be placed on this (see pp. 10 ff.). For the rest we may quote the words that Driver himself applies to Jeremiah a few lines higher up. "Care must be taken not to limit arbitrarily either the terms or the manner in which he might express himself" (p. 266).

¹ See pp. 147 f.

with his royal palace. . . . At the same time the lofty citadel made a watch tower whence the level country for miles could be commanded.”¹

Again take this verse, “A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her, and they shall become as women : a sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed” (Jer. l. 37). That is extraordinarily true to the facts. Nebuchadrezzar had in fact filled Babylon with a mingled people as well as making it a lofty fortress that was (on paper) impregnable. But in so doing he had laid the seeds of destruction, for he had forgotten that it is men not walls that constitute the strength of a city. And so when the trial came “the mingled people” were disaffected. They became as women. “The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they remain in their strongholds ; their might hath failed ; they are become as women : her dwelling-places are set on fire ; her bars are broken” (li. 30). That the predictions of the early part of the verse were literally fulfilled we know from the inscriptions. Whether the Persians after entering the city dismantled the entrances (cp. 58) does not appear from the inscriptions. Some of Jeremiah’s details may be mere poetical embellishment, but on the other hand they are of a character that would probably cause them to be passed over in silence in inscriptions prepared by the Babylonian priests. It would have been a wise military precaution to weaken the city’s defences sufficiently to make a successful rebellion against the Persian power more difficult.

Berosus ² states that Cyrus ordered the destruction of the walls outside the city. Hdt. iii. 159 asserts that Cyrus did not destroy the walls. But Berosus speaks of the walls outside, so that possibly these were destroyed and inner walls left. On the other hand, side by side with this prediction of an undisputed entry we read li. 4, “thrust through in her streets,” see also 47, 49. We know from the passage of the Nabonidus chronicle already quoted ³ that rebels occupied Esaggil : and this implies fighting. But there seems to have been more.

¹ Rogers, *History* ii. p. 535.

² Josephus c. Ap. I, xx. 152.

³ Rev. 16 ff. See pp. 85 f.

There is a passage of the Nabonidus chronicle (Rev. 22 f.) which is unfortunately mutilated. "In the month of Marchesvan dark, the eleventh day, Gobryas unto . . . 23 and the king died."¹ J. v. Prašek² holds that the lacuna should be filled with a statement that Gobryas took the royal quarter and that it was then that Belshazzar met his death.

Very interesting is the forecast of the return of the mingled peoples which was so strikingly fulfilled.³ "And I will do judgement upon Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall" (li. 44). "But though Babylon lost its importance it has never been without inhabitants, that is if by Babylon is meant the whole circuit of the ancient city, which as Aristotle said was 'not so much a city in dimensions as a nation.' Strabo did indeed describe it in the last century B.C. as a desert⁴ and Benjamin of Tudela in the Middle Ages has preserved a description of its ruined state. As Dean Stanley says 'Babylon has never ceased to be inhabited. Hillah, a town with a population of five thousand souls, is within its walls, and the Arabs still wander through it.'⁵ At the same time the real Babylon and the site of the royal palace of Nebuchadrezzar are but a mass of ruinous heaps and unsightly mounds, and the haunt, as the prophet foretold, of the wolf and the jackal."⁶

The conclusion to which we come, then, is that apart from the questions raised by the time element there is no real discrepancy between the oracle and the actual course of events. Of some touches we cannot speak confidently on our present information. They *may* be poetical embellishment or it may be that they were followed by corresponding events of which we have no record.

Kuenen does not mention Jeremiah's prophecy against

¹ Transactions, etc., p. 144.

² *Geschichte der Meder und Perser* I [1906], p. 230.

³ See p. 98.

⁴ xvi. i. 5 *ἔρημα μεγάλη ἐστὶν ἡ μεγάλη πόλις*.

⁵ *Jewish Church*, III, p. 66.

⁶ L. Elliot Binns, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* [1919], pp. 374 f.

Elam (xlix. 34-39). It appears from Ezekiel xxxii. 24 that this was fulfilled. The return foretold by xlix. 39 is attested by the inscription of Cyrus,¹ and it is worth noticing that Darius had to face revolts.²

¹ See p. 98.

² F. H. Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden* [1911], pp. 22, 29 §§ 16 f., 22 f.

CHAPTER VI

The Predictions Concerning the Future of Israel

IN the seventh chapter of his *Prophets and Prophecy in Israel* which deals with the unfulfilled predictions relating to the future of Israel, Kuenen devotes a long section ¹ to the supremacy of the house of David. Many of his passages are Messianic or otherwise irrelevant to the enquiry. The prophets foretold an era of perpetual peace and this has not yet been realised. It does not in the least follow that it never will be. On the other hand Kuenen has swept into his net a number of prophecies that are not Messianic and have been fulfilled, and it is necessary to say a few words of some of them.

The gravamen of what is left of his charge after the irrelevant passages have been eliminated appears to lie in two counts, which however are not very clearly formulated: (1) in his view some prophecies require a succession of Davidic rulers, and this has not come about, and (2) other oracles require or at any rate would be satisfied by the coming of one single king. It will be best to begin with the second matter.

After referring to Ezekiel xvii. 22-24, he continues: "The family of David has thus still a future and shall reign: more than this is not said here; the appearance of one single king must have been regarded as the realisation of the prophecy, but equally so, the restoration and continuance of the royal dynasty. The same is the case also in another oracle in which, in like manner, the

¹ Pp. 202-224.

humiliation of Zedekiah is followed by 'the coming of him who has the right,' that is, who is qualified to assume the kingly dignity.¹ The prophet does not enter into details; the explanation of his words also is not quite certain; but that which most readily presents itself to the mind is to suppose here an allusion to the same future of the house of David, of which he had previously prophesied.² The idea which he formed of it must be learned by us from the other, less indefinite, passages which were explained above.

"Hitherto we have found no one prophetic utterance which contains more than the expectation of the permanency or the restoration of the dynasty of David. But, at the same time, it was plain to us that Jeremiah and Ezekiel *individualise*, as it were, that expectation, and express themselves in such a way that their words could apply as well to one single Davidic king as to each one of the Davidic kings."³

He had already discussed Ezekiel xxxiv. 23 f. and xxxvii. 22-5. On this last passage one comment must be made. The Hebrew has (xxxvii. 25), "they shall dwell therein, they *and their children and their children's children for ever*"; and My servant David shall be prince over them for ever"; but the italicised words are wanting in the Greek. The phrase "for ever" is not necessarily an expression of perpetuity. It may only mean permanence.⁴ None of these passages therefore requires anything more than a single Davidic ruler after the exile, and as we know this was fulfilled in Zerubbabel.

We come now to Jeremiah xxiii. 1-8: "Woe unto the shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, against the shepherds that feed My people: Ye have scattered My flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. And I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries

¹ Ezek. xxi. 32, Heb. (v. 27, Auth. Ver.).

² Compare also Ezek. xxi. 31 (26 Auth. Ver.) with xvii. 24; the contrast there is altogether the same as here.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 210.

⁴ See p. 145.

whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds ; and they shall be fruitful and multiply. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them : and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, saith the Lord. 5. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute judgement and justice in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely : and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord is our righteousness. 7. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, As the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt ; but, As the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them ; and they shall dwell in their own land." The parallel in xxxiii. 15 f. must be compared : " In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David ; and he shall execute judgement and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely : and this is the name whereby she shall be called, The Lord is our righteousness." It will be observed that xxiii. 1-8 falls into three parts. The first (vers. 1-4) is plural in form though not necessarily in meaning. If it is to be regarded as plural in meaning, we can only point out that even though our knowledge of the post-exilic period is often a complete blank we know of Zerubbabel, Nehemiah and the Maccabees. The third part (vers. 7 f.) was also literally fulfilled. The second (5 f.) deals with a righteous branch of David who is to rule over Israel as king. Now the Hebrew word " king " was applied to viceroys.¹ The only natural interpretation is that the branch is an individual. " He shall reign as a king, etc.," points strongly in that direction and no other meaning is consistent with the placing of Judah's deliverance which was a single act " in his days," xxiii. 6, or " in those days," xxxiii. 15. The passages are absolutely satisfied by the facts we know about Zerubbabel.

¹ See p. 99.

This is apparent on their face, but we have strong independent confirmation. Zechariah twice (iii. 8, vi. 12) refers to the prophecy of Jeremiah in terms that absolutely exclude the conception that he understood by the branch anything but a single individual. "Behold I will bring forth my servant the branch" (iii. 8). "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne" (vi. 12 f.). It was Zerubbabel who finished the temple and was understood by Zechariah to be the "Branch." Now in considering the weight to be attached to Zechariah's testimony we are not reduced to *ad hoc* considerations or to the views of men who have no experience in weighing evidence. There is a well-known doctrine of interpretation that embodies the views of centuries of reflection and experience. The following passage from a well-known legal text book summarises the considerations that are applicable.

"It is said that the best exposition of a statute or any other document is that which it has received from contemporary authority. *Optima est legum interpres consuetudo*.¹ *Contemporanea expositio est optima et fortissima in lege*.² Where this has been given by enactment or judicial decision, it is of course to be accepted as conclusive. But, further, the meaning publicly given by contemporary, or long professional, usage, is presumed to be the true one, even when the language has etymologically or popularly a different meaning. It is obvious that the language of a statute must be understood in the sense in which it was understood when it was passed; and those who lived at or near the time when it was passed, may reasonably be supposed to be better acquainted than their descendants with the circumstances to which it had relation, as well as with the sense then attached to legislative expressions."³ It must be remembered that Zechariah wrote within seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy and was in a position to know its true meaning. There can

¹ Dig. i. 3, 37.

² 2 Inst. 11.

³ Maxwell, *On the Interpretation of Statutes*, 6th ed. [1920], pp. 531 f.

therefore be no doubt as to the importance of his testimony.

There is however a further passage to consider. After Jeremiah xxxiii. 16 we find the following: "For thus saith the Lord: There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before Me to offer burnt offerings, and to burn oblations, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord: If ye can break My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night, so that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, My ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David My servant, and the Levites that minister unto Me. And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the Lord did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise My people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the Lord: If My covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David My servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them" (17-26).

The passage is omitted from the Greek—possibly because it was supposed to be an unfulfilled prophecy at the time that the version was made. Careful study, however, leads me to think that while there are some obvious faults in the transmission of the text, the oracle in what was its original form has been literally fulfilled. In verse 26 Theodotion and the Syriac have "ruler" for the Hebrew "rulers," and if the final clause is temporal in sense that is the only possible reading. Translating 25 f. with this change and a few others recommended in Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* we get the following:

" Thus saith the Lord : If My covenant of day and night (?stand) not, and [so Syriac Vulgate] if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth ; then will I also cast away the seed of David My servant so that I will not take of his seed to be a ruler over the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I cause their captivity to return and have mercy on them."

Not merely was that literally fulfilled : it is in absolute accordance with the beginning of the passage in 14-16. Other things being equal the preference should always be given to readings and interpretations that make a prophet self-consistent and not to those that involve him in self-contradiction. This principle is really decisive as to the meaning of many of the oracles discussed in this section.

In verse 17 the Syriac reads " son " for the Hebrew " man." This verse attaches closely to what precedes and forms part of the same oracle. It is a continuation of what is said about the branch, and it is to him only that it applies : " there shall not be cut off from David a son reigning over Israel." In 20 f. we have the same promise as in 25 f. and this is followed in 22 with a promise to multiply the seed of David. But it is not said that this seed shall continue to reign. As a matter of fact we know that the house of David could be traced certainly up to the Middle Ages.

I think, however, that the Hebrew text has probably suffered from another cause. There is a very striking resemblance between 25 f. and 20 f., and it is not impossible that originally there was only one passage asseverating that the restoration of a Davidic king was as certain as the procession of day and night. If so, the present trouble would be due to the collation of different MSS. and possibly some commentary.

The view that has been taken of Jeremiah's original meaning is confirmed by xxx. 18-22. There again he prophesies a return from the captivity and a native prince. It is unlikely that he meant anything different elsewhere.

We come now to the predictions of the reunion of Ephraim and Judah treated by Kuenen in the second section of chapter vii.¹ We have already seen that

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 196 ff.

several of these oracles were fulfilled under Josiah.¹

It is, however, to another event that most of the predictions refer and to this we must now turn. The archaeological evidence is explicit. Cyrus makes the following statement :

"From . . . to Ashur and Susa, Agade, Eshnunak, Zamban, Meturnu, Deri, to the border of Gutium, the cities beyond the Tigris, whose sites had been founded of old,—the gods who dwelt in them I returned to their places, and caused them to settle in their eternal shrines. All their people I assembled and returned them to their dwellings."¹

The fact is that the Persians reversed the policy of the Assyrians and Chaldeans not for the Jews alone but generally. Once this is firmly grasped there is not the smallest ground for doubting the Biblical passages that speak of the return of Israel. So long as we only knew of the return of the Jews it was necessary to force a strained meaning on them. The monumental evidence however has changed this, and permits us to adopt the natural interpretations. It should particularly be noted that Cyrus says "From . . . to Ashur and Susa," so that the emancipation was expressly extended to the peoples, like Israel, settled in Assyria's old territory. Zechariah viii. 13 is expressly addressed to the House of Judah *and the House of Israel*, which is quite unambiguous. Nor is there any ground for questioning the text. Some Israelites therefore had returned. Malachi ii. 11 also has a similar meaning on any natural interpretation. Not very much can be made of the lists in Ezra ii. and Nehemiah vii. Many of the names are unknown and, so far as we can understand them, they refer to Judah and Benjamin. Even where the men of Bethel figure (Ezra ii. 28, Neh. vii. 32), presumably that is as the result of Josiah's reannexation of Bethel. But there is other evidence. The word Israel is used frequently to denote the people in Ezra and Nehemiah. Often it may mean nothing more than Jews, but in some places this is either improbable or impossible. Thus Ezra vi. 16 f. is quite clear, "And the children of

¹ See pp. 59 ff.

² Barton, *op. cit.* 386. That this would happen had been perfectly well known to the prophets. See pp. 79, 90, 91, 94.

Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of the house of God with joy. And they offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs: and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel." Its meaning is emphasised by Ezra vi. 21 f.: "And the children of Israel, which were come again out of the captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord, the God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, *and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them* to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel." The meaning of king of Assyria in this passage is discussed below.¹ Here we must note that it was Israel, not Judah, that had been carried into captivity by Assyria, and con-

¹ Contrary to current theories the word Ashur in the Bible never denotes any other country than the Assyria of history. See Appendix II.

The expression "king" was applied in Hebrew to many who in modern parlance would be denoted by other terms, such as viceroy, regent, or associate king. For instance, one of the causes of the chronological difficulties of the books of Kings lies in the fact that associate kings were called kings with the result that the same years could be reckoned twice over as parts of two reigns (see p. 164). Nebuchadrezzar is called "king of Babylon" in Jer. xlvi. 2, but at the time of the battle of Carchemish to which this relates he had not yet acceded to the throne which was occupied by his father Nabopolassar. The latter had delegated power to his son on account of failing health. "Belshazzar the king" of Daniel v. 1 was what we should call crown prince regent. We have seen that So or Seve, who is called "king of Egypt" in 2 Kings xvii. 4, was in fact no other than Piankhi's viceroy (pp. 33, 160).

That the expression "king of Assyria" in our passage does *not* mean Cyrus is shown by his titular. "I am Cyrus, king of the world, the great king, the powerful king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters of the world, son of Cambyses, etc. . . ." Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 382.

On the other hand it does mean his viceroy. He had appointed Gaubaruva (Gobryas) to this office. He was a Persian prince who already enjoyed royal prerogatives (J. v. Prášek, *op. cit.* I, pp. 203 f., 227). His correct Hebrew title would therefore be king of Assyria.

sequently it is Israel, not Judah, that returns. In vii. 13 according to the Aramaic the permission of Artaxerxes extends to any of the people of Israel in his kingdom. In 1 Esdras viii. 10, however, the word is Jews, which may represent a different text or may simply be due to the translator. In any case the Aramaic agrees entirely with what is known of the Persian policy. When Ezra iv. 3 speaks of the heads of the fathers' houses of Israel, there seems no reason to doubt that it means what it says.

It is, however, interesting to notice that after the exile the Jews are very much the predominant partner. For this there are several reasons. Judah had maintained itself in its country much longer than Israel, and under Josiah had absorbed portions of Northern Israel, including the men of Bethel who were now reckoned as part of the kingdom. The strength and separateness of the Israelites who had remained in the land had been broken by the colonies of aliens introduced by the Assyrians. Earlier in their history the Israelites, then a rising power, had been able to assimilate Canaanites, but the post-exilic documents make it clear that after their misfortunes many of them became merged in a nondescript mass "the people of the land." Owing to the much greater length of the time that had elapsed since the Assyrian deportations it is probable that a relatively smaller proportion of Northern Israelites than of Judaeans returned, and in many cases they may have settled not in Judah and Benjamin, but in their former seats. These considerations amply account for their relative insignificance.¹

From the facts we turn to some predictions. Amos ix. 8-15 had foretold the destruction of the kingdom and the sifting of Israel among the nations, and also a return under

¹ In this connection it is interesting to note that archaeology has recovered what may be traces of the Israelites in exile. A number of contract tablets that were written between 666 and 606 B.C. at Kannu, called Canneh in Ezekiel xxvii. 23, near Haran in Mesopotamia, contain names compounded with the name of a god Au; and one of them speaks of the treasury of the God Au who dwells in Kannu. S. Schiffer, *Keilinschriftlichen Spuren der in der zweiten Hälfte des 8. Jahrhunderts von den Assyriern nach Mesopotamien deportierten Samariter* [1907], p. 10; G. A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, 2nd. Ed., 450 ff.

a Davidic prince. This was fulfilled. With this is coupled a prophecy of their possessing the remnant of Edom, which was in fact fulfilled in 130 B.C. Two points should however be noted. The expression "in that day," used in ix. 11, must be read in the light of the treatment of the time element in prophecy. For the present we can only note that to a modern reader it gives the impression of the grouping of events which were widely separated. And again the prophets and other canonical writers sometimes express permanence in terms that we should apply to perpetuity.¹ This is the case in verse 15, for ultimately the people were plucked up, though not till after the lapse of many centuries. It may also be noticed that there is a poetic element (e.g. ver. 13) which must not be taken too literally.²

Whether Kuenen is right in regarding Hosea xiv. 2-9 as prediction seems to me very doubtful. Rather does it appear to be a promise of what would happen if Israel returned from its iniquity. That is to say it is a conditional prophecy, and as the condition was never fulfilled it falls out of account.

Zechariah ix. 10 and x. 6-12 were literally fulfilled (allowance being made for the figurative language in which the fall of Egypt is described). Assyria *was* brought down and the sceptre of Egypt *did* pass away.³

Kuenen refers to Isaiah xvii. 4-11. I cannot see how this passage bears on our enquiry. But when he cites Isaiah xi. 11-16 he brings us to some of the most remarkable fulfilled predictions that can be found. Here we must again notice the curious use of "in that day" and the grouping of events widely removed in point of time which was observed in Amos. Subject to that and to the poetic phraseology we have no difficulty in recognising the truth of his forecasts. Judah and Ephraim did return,

¹ See pp. 145 ff. below and *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Jan. 1921.

² I am of course aware that some critics have denied this passage to Amos and declared it to be exilic. But here, as so often, the evidence of fulfilment is a complete answer, for how can we suppose that some anonymous editor or supplementer could predict events that would and did come to pass centuries later, as in the case of the prediction regarding Edom?

³ See pp. 112 ff.

and there was no further rivalry between them. In the Maccabaeian age they conquered the Philistines (96 B.C.), Edom, Moabitis (under Alexander Jannai, *circ.* 94 B.C.) and Ammonitis (under Judas Maccabaeus, 1 Macc. v. 6; Jos., *Ant.* xii. 8. 1).¹ In verse 15 we again meet poetic phraseology, but it remains true that the Jews enjoyed the facility of travelling in peace and without molestation from the lands of their dispersion to Palestine. Isaiah x. 33-xii. 6 appears to be a single prophecy dealing with the Chaldean invasion (x. 33 f.), Zerubbabel (xi. 1 ff.) the restoration and the glories of the post-exilic age, and this is shown by Isaiah lxxv. to be the correct view.

It is difficult to read Jeremiah iii. 12 ff. without feeling that the prophet was in touch with the exiled Israelites. In any case it is to be noted that his predictions were completely fulfilled. The return appears, as we have seen, to have been on a small scale, "one of a city and two of a family" (ver. 14). As he anticipated after the return the ark no longer existed (iii. 16) and a time was to come when converts from all nations were gathered unto Jerusalem. So too the facts of the return and the history of the Maccabaeian age fulfil the predictions of reunion in the other passages cited by Kuenen (xxx. 1-9, 18 ff., 23 ff., 27 ff., 31-34, xxxii. 37-40).

That the prediction of Obadiah 18 was literally fulfilled has already appeared.

Finally we reach Ezekiel. As he foretold (xxxvii. 15-28), Judah and Israel were united in their own land as a single nation under a Davidic prince, and they were incomparably more free from idolatry than ever before. This was probably due to several causes. It is likely that only the more religious elements returned. And the teachings of history and the fulfilment of the predictions of Moses and the prophets finally convinced them of the truth and worth of their ancestral religion. Except where inter-marriage threatened the people's religion and identity there seems never to have been any considerable inclination to return to polytheism and idolatry.²

It is possible to deal quite shortly with some of the other matters of which Kuenen treats in his seventh chap-

¹ See pp. 18, 115 f.

² On Ezekiel xl.-xlviii., see pp. 129 f.

ter, because he advances very little of any cogency. In section I (pp. 189-96) he speaks of the return of the exiles. It is certainly true that the prophecies use most exuberant language, but I am entirely in agreement with Kuenen's own observation, "All this is poetry, but the poetical embellishment of an idea which is a firm conviction of the prophet."¹ Now this idea was that in contrast to the departure from Egypt and the trials of the journeyings in the wilderness, the exiles would be free to return by the most comfortable route with whatever conveniences were possible in contemporary travelling and would enjoy the full benefit of the Persian system of communications and the peace and security of travel ensured by the great king's rule. That was literally fulfilled and I cannot think that we should be justified in attaching too much importance to figurative or hyperbolic expressions.

Kuenen continues: "A return of Jewish exiles did, as we know, take place after the capture of Babylon by Cyrus. That this return did not correspond to the expectations of the prophets, and that, in particular, the condition of those who had returned formed a sharp contrast to their predictions, may now at once be assumed as proved, and will appear still more clearly in the sequel."²

In support of this "assumed" proof he quotes Zechariah i. 12: "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these three score and ten years?" The continuation however contains the following: "Therefore thus saith the Lord: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; My house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem. Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem," 16 f. All this was absolutely fulfilled. Kuenen also refers to vii. 5, but that does not seem to have any bearing on the question. Thus there does not appear to be any substance in this complaint.

Section IV³ is devoted to the spiritual and material

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 193.

² *Op. cit.* p. 194.

³ *Op. cit.* pp. 225-242.

welfare of restored Israel. Kuenen has here put together predictions that relate to entirely different matters, and many of them are examined and explained elsewhere in this volume. Moreover he tends to take literally a number of phrases that are poetical in character. When allowance is made for these factors two great truths stand out.

It was the case that restored Israel was spiritually very different from the pre-exilic people. Except for the danger constituted at one period by intermarriage which, though serious at the time, was capable of being successfully overcome by men of incomparably lesser calibre than the great prophets, there was never any risk of polytheism and idolatry. The heart of flesh and the new spirit had in fact been given. For this there were excellent reasons. The return would necessarily be limited to those who were filled with patriotic and religious enthusiasm. The idolaters who figure so largely in Isaiah xl.-lxvi. would have been automatically eliminated by continued residence in the lands of exile. To this must be added the enormous influence now wielded by the Law and the writings of the prophets as the result of the national misfortunes and the fulfilment of the predictions.

With regard to the prosperity of the people we have little information; but in the case of a hardworking nation continuous peace and inclusion in a large economic area such as the Persian Empire would obviously be conducive to satisfactory results.

Section VI ¹ on the undisturbed continuance of Israel in the land of their habitation complains that "their settlement in Canaan is to be followed by no new dispersion." Nor was it for six hundred years. Now it seems puerile to suggest that the truth of a prophet's revelation can be discredited by showing that something else which was not to happen for six centuries was not revealed to him. The message given to a messenger is limited to the subject-matter of the communication that the sender desires to make, and if a prophet in fact delivered a true message within the limits of his commission it is immaterial that he failed to deliver some other message which did not fall

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 258 ff.

within those limits. To this must be added the old confusion between permanence and perpetuity. When Ezekiel says "my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever" (xxxvii. 28) he is merely employing the expression which need mean no more than permanently.¹ Or read Isaiah lxii. 8 f.: "The Lord hath sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength. Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and strangers shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: but they that have garnered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have gathered it shall drink it in the courts of My sanctuary." We are not to understand this as written with any reference to events many centuries ahead. The meaning simply is that the returned exiles are to enjoy a durable peace which will enable them to perform their daily tasks in the security that what they sow will not be reaped by an invader. We know that the Persian kingdom in fact assured these conditions to them. If the passages be read reasonably with the desire to reach their true and natural meaning they contain nothing that can cause any trouble.

Kuenen devotes a lengthy section to a consideration of the relationship with the gentiles.² With this I shall not deal in detail, for there is need of a study of the whole question in the light of all the Biblical data, not merely those derived from the prophets. Many of the passages on which he relies are in fact explained elsewhere in this volume. Here three points only need be made. First the Bible nowhere contemplates Jewish rule of any kind over all nations. The widest limits ever assigned to Israel's territory in any passage are from the frontier of Egypt to the river Euphrates, a very small portion of the world as known to the ancient Hebrews. Secondly the prophets do unquestionably believe that the whole world will ultimately worship the Lord and foretell also some conversions to Judaism that have actually occurred. This recognition of the sole Godhead of the Holy One of Israel, however, in no way suggests any Israelite supremacy in the political field. Thirdly, they foretell a peace-

¹ See p. 145.

² *Op. cit.* pp. 242 ff.

ful restoration of the scattered Israelites by the nations, executed in a spirit of goodwill. The terms used are often those of oriental poetry and should not be pressed in the same way as if they had employed the prose of modern Western civilization as the vehicle of their thought.

CHAPTER VII

The Minor Prophets of the Eighth Century B.C.

IN the light of the inscriptions it is easy to understand the predictions of Amos i. 3-ii. 16. In every case they probably refer to Assyria. With regard to the prophecy against Ammon the extant monuments tell us nothing. We find Ammon paying tribute at the same time as Ahaz of Judah and again in 701.¹ The most probable period for a revolt against Assyria would seem to be in the reign of Shalmaneser V jointly with the Phœnician cities and Israel.² It did not rebel in either of the years (713 and 701) in which Judah was implicated. According to 2 Chronicles xxvii. 5 f. Jotham defeated the Ammonites, but it is more probable that Amos has Assyria in view as in all the other cases. Jotham's war however would account for its never being on the side of Judah in a rebellion. The captivity of Damascus and Israel, punishment of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron and the remnant of the Philistines (the word "remnant" pointing to the double punishment of 713 and 701), Tyre, Edom, Moab, Judah are all attested by the monuments; and having regard to their fragmentary character it is reasonable to suppose that even when an occasional detail is missing from the Assyrian sources further information might prove that the prophet's forecast was fulfilled. Very remarkable in its accuracy of foresight is the prophecy of iii. 11 f. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God: An adversary there shall be, even round about the land: and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled. . . . As the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth

¹ See p. 26 *n.* and p. 46 *n.*

² See pp. 34, 67 f.

of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear ; so shall the children of Israel be " (cp. v. 3, 27, vi. 14, vii. 11 and ix. 8 f.). The details he gives are not less striking. The threats against the sanctuaries (vii. 9) and Bethel (iii. 14, v. 5 and cp. Hos. x. 6-8, 15) and that the priest of Bethel shall die in a land that is unclean (vii. 17) receive a curious confirmation in the narrative of 2 Kings xvii. 27 f., according to which the Assyrian king was compelled to send an Israelite priest, who took up his residence in Bethel. The necessity for this makes it obvious that all the priests of Bethel were among those killed or exiled.

The menace to the kine of Bashan (iv. 1-4) predicts the deportation of 732 B.C. The words of vi. 7, "Therefore now shall they go captive, with the first that go captive, and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away," exactly foretell the Assyrian practice of taking away the notables. The three visions of vii. 1-9 may refer to the three advances of Assyria. First Tiglath-pileser (Pul) took tribute but the land was spared, next he annexed the North in 732, lastly comes the total destruction, but this is not certain.

We know that the house of Jeroboam II perished by the sword (vii. 9) and Zechariah xi. 8 makes it probable that Jeroboam himself did, and that Zechariah was really co-regent with his father for the last six months of his reign ; but the context favours the view that Amos is here using House of Jeroboam to denote the separate kingdom founded by Jeroboam I and ruled in his time by Jeroboam II, just as the Assyrians called it the land of the house of Omri. This, however, is not the explanation suggested by Amaziah in verse 11. The most natural view seems to be that we have in this oracle an intentional *double entendre*.

In Amos vi. 2 f. we read of Calneh Gath and Hamath in a passage where, as is now generally recognized, they are held up as a warning to the Israelites. In the reign of Ashur-dan III (771-753 B.C.) two expeditions were made to the West, in 765 and 755 B.C. respectively, but unfortunately we have no details, the Eponym list with notes being our sole authority. Gath was conquered about this time by Uzziah according to 2 Chronicles xxvi. 6, and it is

significant that it is never mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions.

The failure to grasp certain views of the prophets which differed slightly from those held by an editor of the books of Kings must share with a misunderstanding of their explicit remarks the responsibility for much of the higher critical work. It will be remembered that soon after the accession of Rehoboam to the throne of all Israel disruption took place, the Northern tribes under the leadership of Ephraim forming a separate kingdom under Jeroboam I, while the south with Jerusalem as capital remained loyal to the house of David. It is also necessary to bear in mind the fact (about which there is no dispute), that Jeroboam in order to consolidate his position introduced religious abuses that were entirely contrary to the Mosaic law and involved idolatry (1 Kings xii. 25 ff.). It is to be observed that there is a close connection between the existence of the Northern Kingdom as a separate political unit and Jeroboam's religious changes. Complete union of the North and South would at all times have presented great political advantages by ensuring greater strength and security and abolishing the frontier between the two kingdoms. But religious unity would have made for political unity. Hence a position in which the separateness of the Northern Kingdom and the calf worship with its accessories necessarily stood and fell together: and no faithful adherent of the imageless religion of Moses who realised this could view the existence of a northern dynasty without disapproval.¹ Historically too our materials suggest that the religious condition of the Southern Kingdom generally was often on the whole considerably better than that of the Northern. The South could and sometimes did have good kings who were more or less faithful to the better religious traditions: the North might find a ruler who would break with the Phœnician Baal, but experience showed that none of its monarchs could break with the calves. Idolatry was necessarily incurable so long as its political cause remained. Another motive that tended in the same direction was the inevitable national feeling. In an age in which the

¹ See further pp. 20 ff.

doctrine of nationalities is as powerful as in the present, it surely needs no elaborate proof to show that the best minds on either side of the border would regret the schism and long for re-union as the natural ideal. This feeling would be strengthened whenever the course of events brought special misfortune to either kingdom. As monarchy was the only practicable form of government at the time, the longing would necessarily take the form of a desire for reunion under the dynasty which possessed the triple claims of legitimacy, freedom from necessary connection with idolatry, and the religious and political glamour attaching to the name of David.

Hosea was fully imbued with these ideas. He condemned the separate Israelite Kingdom with its calf worship and other religious abuses in the strongest terms and foretold the destruction of the kingdom and the Assyrian exile, i. 4, 6; iii. 4; 'viii. 3-14; x. 1-8, 15; xi. 5; xii. 12 (11), 15 (14); xiii. 10-12, xiv. 1 (xiii. 16), etc. He looked forward to a subsequent reunion under a Davidic king (ii. 9 (7); iii. 5; vi. 11). Unfortunately B. Stade¹ did not understand that in Hosea Israel means the Northern Kingdom, not the whole twelve tribes. Accordingly he thought that viii. 4 referred to the kingdom of Saul, though both this verse and its context make it perfectly plain that the reference is to the kingdom of the ten tribes only. He further misunderstood the references in ix. 9 ff.; x. 9, to the terrible story of Judges xix. as referring to the monarchy of Saul. Thereupon he inferred that Hosea disapproved of all monarchy and declared "and David their king" in iii. 5 to be spurious!² This at once became a firmly established "result" of modern criticism and was copied into book after book. It is only necessary to read Hosea with ordinary intelligence to see how baseless it is.

It may be well to deal with Stade's other attacks on Hosea in the same note before passing on. He rejects i. 7 as breaking the connection and train of thought. The answer is obvious. To the prophets Assyria was God's instrument to chastise His people for unfaithfulness. Israel, the worse of the two, was utterly destroyed by one

¹ *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* i. [1887], p. 177.

² *Op. cit.* p. 577 n.

wave of the Assyrian flood ; Judah for her share of guilt was severely punished but yet saved from the worst in another wave. Hosea foresees this, and his thought inevitably passes from the one kingdom to the sister state that shared his love and refers now to the deliverance (i. 7), and anon (viii. 14) to her participation in sin and consequent punishment, while again he urges her (iv. 15*a*) not to follow in Israel's steps. We must remember that we are reading the utterances of a poet and patriot who was moved to the depth of his nature (see e.g. xi. 8 ff. xiv.) and not a string of mathematical formulae. Stade of course attacks viii. 14 too for the mention of Judah and also iv. 15*a*. His remaining objection is to ii. 1-3 (i. 10-ii. 1). This passage certainly seems out of place, but there are other displacements in the prophetic literature, and elsewhere it has been shown how the early form of the Hebrew book favoured such accidents.¹ It is unquestionably in Hosea's style, and it is extremely difficult to believe that any annotator could be a poet of this calibre and a master of the same style as Hosea. If a parallel instance occurred in the case of any secular poet whose works had depended on a MS. tradition for centuries no competent scholar would dream of suggesting anything but a dislocation of the text. Such a transposition as that put forward by Dr. Melville Scott,² who places chapter iii. after i. 9, appears to meet the needs of the case. Other verses have been rejected by other writers on equally flimsy grounds, but here as elsewhere the driving force is to be found in the rationalist theories which are contrary to the available evidence and therefore need not detain us.

The first eight chapters of the book of Zechariah are unquestionably the work of one prophet who is called Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo. In ix. 1 we find a fresh title, followed by yet another in xii. 1.

Ordinarily of course the title at the beginning of a book applies to the contents of the whole book, but it happens that in this case we are confronted by exceptional circumstances. Iddo's grandson was a well-known prophet, but

¹ Contributions to a new theory of the Composition of the Pentateuch, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1918-20.

² *The Message of Hosea*, 1921.

Isaiah viii. 2 introduces us to another member of a prophetic circle who was also called Zechariah son of Jeberechiah, which latter is the same name as Berechiah, that of Iddo's son. If there were any prophecies of Zechariah son of Jeberechiah they could hardly fail to be added to those of the son of Berechiah when the prophetic writings were placed in their present order in view of the identity of the names of the two men and of their respective fathers. The fact that there was another prophet called Zechariah son of Jeberechiah would also account for the description of the post-exilic Zechariah as son (descendant) of *Iddo* in Ezra v. 1, vi. 14, the name of an ancestor being used as the distinguishing sign because the two fathers bore the same name. Hence in dealing with the book of Zechariah we are faced by conditions unlike those prevailing elsewhere.

When we read Zechariah ix.-xi. we find that it is replete with historical allusions. Our knowledge of the history is not sufficient to enable us to explain them all, but there are enough of an entirely unambiguous character to make it certain that we are not dealing with a post-exilic prophet. "All the tribes of Israel" in ix. 1 is far from decisive, but "I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim" (ix. 10), "I have filled the bow with Ephraim" (13), "I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel" (xi. 14) are expressions that could only have been used when the Northern Kingdom existed as a separate military and political unit. Egypt and Assyria are the principal seats of the diaspora as in other early prophets¹ (x. 10). "The pride of Assyria shall be brought down" (x. 11) could never have been used when Assyria was a province of Persia. The teraphim of x. 2 are never found in post-exilic times.

It is however best to consider Zechariah xi. with its continuation in xiii. 7-9 as a unity and see how it must be interpreted as a whole. The "flock of slaughter" is the Northern Kingdom. Its destruction is here threatened. The cutting asunder of the staff Pleasantness (R.V. Beauty) puts an end to "my covenant which I had made with all

¹ See pp. 169 ff.

the peoples." We have seen that this refers to war between Israel and other nations.¹ The cutting asunder of the staff Bands breaks the brotherhood between Judah and Israel, i.e. announces the war between them. The foolish shepherd is Pekah, who in lieu of conserving the resources of the monarchy and making a confederacy with the neighbouring states to resist the Assyrian menace actually allied himself with Damascus and other powers to make war against Ahaz of Judah. The Southern Kingdom was compelled to purchase safety by bribing Tiglath-pileser to come to its assistance (2 Kings xvi. 5-9). Pekah was deposed and killed in a conspiracy (2 Kings xv. 30), though our knowledge is insufficient to enable us to say what is the precise reference of the right eye (Zech. xi. 17). Certainly the shepherd was slain and the sheep were scattered (xiii. 7). Two parts of the land were cut off (8), i.e. there were two deportations to Assyria (in 732 and 722 B.C. respectively). The third that was left therein was brought through the fire and refined, i.e. it had to suffer the fate of being incorporated in an Assyrian province under an Assyrian governor and having colonists from other lands settled in its country. We know that as late as 645 Samaria still possessed an Assyrian governor. We have seen how Zechariah xiii. 9 was literally fulfilled.²

The cutting off of three shepherds in one month (Zech. xi. 8) must refer to three kings. Jeroboam II, Zechariah and Shallum were murdered within a month.³

Zechariah ix. 5 f. is so interesting that it may be quoted at length. "Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also, and shall be sore pained; and Ekron, for her expectation shall be ashamed: and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines." Tiglath-pileser's inscriptions as to Ashkelon and Gaza have already been quoted.⁴ P. Rost, *Keilschrifttexte Tiglat-pileasers III* [1893] I, p. XXXI. after discussing the available material, which however is badly damaged, comes to the conclusion that either Ashdod or Ekron received the first shock.

¹ Pp. 24 f. ² Pp. 59 f. ³ P. 23. ⁴ Pp. 26 n., 27 n.

In the light of these facts we return to xi. 1-3. Here mention is made of disaster to Lebanon, Bashan and the pride of the Jordan. Similarly in ix. 1-4 evil is foretold for Hadrach, Damascus, Hamath, Tyre and Sidon. All this was literally fulfilled.¹

"In 715 Ashdod revolted, under the leadership of a Greek adventurer, a "Yavâni," from Cyprus or Ionia, but with little success. The "Yavâni escaped towards Egypt, but was captured by a Sinaitic chief and sent in chains to Assyria."²

It has been thought that the words in Zechariah ix. 6 as to a bastard's dwelling in Ashdod referred to the presence of a mixed population. This agrees with the facts revealed by the monuments, for the Greek ruler was presumably supported by Greek troops. There was much contact between the two peoples in this reign.³

When it is remembered that many of the inscriptions are in a fragmentary condition and obviously contained much more about the topics that interest us, it cannot be doubted that originally they threw light on the reference to Ashkelon. The perishing of the king from Gaza is certainly very interestingly illustrated by the statements as to Hanno. Zechariah ix. 7 f. then proceeds to predict

¹ For Bashan and the pride of Jordan (Zech. xi. 1-3) see 2 Kings xv. 29 supported by the quotations from Tiglath-pileser above, p. 26 n. On the same expedition he seems to have campaigned in the Lebanon. The small inscription I begins "... the city of Khatarikka (Hadrach) to mount Saua" (Rogers, *op. cit.* p. 320) and from Annals 126 f. (*ibid.* p. 315) it appears that Mount Saue "reaches to the Lebanon." For Lebanon (Zech. xi. 1) and Hadrach (ix. 1), see the passage from Tiglath-pileser's Annals quoted above, pp. 23 f. n. For Hamath (ix. 2) that passage and also pp. 34, 172. For Damascus, pp. 28 f. n. For Tyre and Sidon (ix. 3), see pp. 67 f.

² Hall, *op. cit.* p. 479. See above, p. 37.

³ In a paper on the relations of Sennacherib and the Greeks, the late Prof. L. W. King writes: "Already in the preceding reign the Assyrians had come in conflict with Ionian pirates, probably as a result of the conquest of Cyprus, for Sargon tells us that he caught them 'like fish' and gave rest to Cilicia (Kue) and Tyre" (*Journal of Hellenic Studies* XXX [1910], p. 331). For Sargon's statement, see H. Winckler, *Die Keilschrifttexte Sargons* (1889) I, p. 149, and D. G. Lyon, *Keilschrifttexte Sargons*, p. 33. Thus in this age the prophecy of Balaam that ships from the coast of Kittim (Cyprus) would afflict Asshur and Eber was fulfilled (Num. xxiv. 24).

the subjection of the Philistines to Judah. This is narrated in 2 Kings xviii. 8 and the Taylor prism, whence we learn that the Ekronites threw their king into chains and handed him over to Hezekiah who held him prisoner in Jerusalem. The Jewish king was forced to surrender the captive, and Sennacherib gave much of his territory to the kings of Ashdod, Ekron and Gaza. Yet Jerusalem and the temple were protected as foretold in ix. 8.¹

The reference to the Greeks in ix. 13 which had been thought to point to a late date receives ample illustration from the passages already quoted if the prophet is foretelling this period. It was in fact an age in which Greek rovers were very active on the coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean. But there is no ground for assuming that it is to the immediate future that he is looking. The contrary is more probable, for there is no reason to suppose that verses 11 ff. do not belong to 9 f. to which they attach naturally. In this case we must look at the prediction as a whole and see when it was realized.

It is usual to regard Zechariah ix. 9 ff. as Messianic. With this view I cannot agree. The Messianic age is elsewhere conceived as one of peace, not of strife, and of a universal acknowledgment of the One God. This prophecy, however, contemplates a period of war during which a king, who will reign over the small territory indicated, will have a triumphant entry into Jerusalem. There will be war between Jews and Greeks. There is no suggestion of religious conversion or of universal religious benefit. The passage is very obscure whether through the state of the text or our ignorance of the allusions, but so much can be clearly made out. There is not only nothing distinctively Messianic in all this, but much that is clearly of a very different character.

On investigation it becomes evident that the prediction as a whole was fulfilled in the Maccabaeian age. The king of 9 f. is Alexander Jannai.

הנהר "the river" clearly means the Yarmuk in Genesis xxxi. 21, 2 Samuel x. 16, 1 Kings v. 1, 2 Chronicles ix. 26. Alexander Jannai certainly reigned from the Yarmuk to the boundaries of the land, i.e. the river of Egypt, and

¹ See pp. 43-54.

from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. In other words the boundaries of the prophecy are precisely those of his kingdom. His joyful reception in Jerusalem after being victorious is recorded by Jos., *Ant.* XIII. xv. § 3 (394) and Bell, *Jud.* I, ix. § 105. The epithet צַדִּיק, righteous, appears to play on the fact that he was a צַדִּיק or Sadducee though he is called righteous in *Ant.* XIII. xvi. § 1 (406). In verse 11 "thou" is feminine. Now under Alexander's widow Alexandra the prisoners kept by her husband were released by the Pharisees (xvi. § 2 (408)) with whom he had advised her to make an agreement (xv. § 5 (403)). Possibly it is to this that verse 11 refers. The incidents, however, are not necessarily in consecutive order, and it may be that the following verses foretell incidents of the period that preceded Alexandra's regency. There certainly was plenty of stirring up of the children of Zion against the children of Greece in those days. Nor was there any lack of incidents relating to agreements, prisoners, hostages, etc., in this period or of episodes of battle and divine protection. Most of the allusions are either too obscure or too corrupt to be identified with any certainty on our present information, but it is probable that if we had the text in its original form and a sufficient account of all the incidents of the period we should have no difficulty in appreciating the prophet's meaning.

I therefore think it probable that Zechariah ix. 9-17 is not Messianic at all but a prediction of what was to happen in the Maccabaeon age.

Zechariah x. was apparently written later than xi., which precedes Pekah's accession. On the other hand, x. 6-12 presupposes at least the first Ephraimite exile (see especially ver. 10, "the land of Gilead and Lebanon"). The text of x. 9 is not quite certain, and unfortunately it is on this verse that the decision whether the oracle precedes or follows the second deportation must depend. If the prophet said in effect "though I scatter them there will be a return," the fall of Samaria is still future. On the other hand if the meaning was "I have scattered them, nevertheless, there will be a return" it is in the past. On this reading, therefore, depends the question whether we should date the chapter in or after the reign of Hoshea.

The disaster to Assyria¹ and Egypt threatened in verse 11 may be any of the calamities that overtook these countries in the century and a half following. The references are not sufficiently definite to enable us to individualise. Zechariah xii. is discussed above.²

Micah i. predicts the destruction of Samaria and foretells that the Assyrian evil will reach to the gate of Jerusalem (12). This was literally fulfilled in 701.³ The prediction about Samaria threatens the idolatrous worship (i. 6). It follows that it precedes the time when that worship was so completely wiped out that new settlers who desired to worship the God of the land required for their instruction a priest sent from exile (2 Kings xvii. 24 ff.). Now Samaria fell in 721 and the oracle therefore precedes that date. But it is to be noted that the full doom predicted in i. 6 did not then ensue. Samaria continued as a city for much longer (Jos., *Ant.* XIII. x. § 3, 281). Either then there is an element of hyperbole in Micah's utterance or else he is, so to speak, telescoping a more distant future with the event that he is primarily foretelling.⁴

It should be noticed that the loss of territory by Hezekiah on the Philistine frontier is foretold in 14 f., "thou shalt give a parting gift to Moresheth-Gath. . . . I will yet bring unto thee, O inhabitant of Mareshah him that shall possess thee." Probably some of the other expressions in the same passage which are obscure to us deal with the same loss. Whether the phrase "the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam" in 15 means that the frontier will be withdrawn to Adullam is not clear. But i. 16 also receives illustration from the Taylor prism. "Make thee bald, and poll thee for the children of thy delight: enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone into captivity from thee." Micah ii. 12 f. is a

¹ That the mention of Assyria in verses 10 and 11 can refer only to the country of that name known to history is shown below, pp. 166 ff.

² See p. 54.

³ See above, ch. III.

⁴ See pp. 147 f. It is easy to see the connection in thought. But for the sins of Samaria the destruction of the northern kingdom and consequent exile would never have taken place, and the city would have remained faithful in Israelite hands and so have escaped both its immediate and ultimate ruin.

disputed passage. Ibn Ezra saw clearly that it was a quotation from the false prophets. To this the objection has been raised that they did not predict a deportation. That is doubtless true up to 732 B.C. But when a large part of the people had actually gone into exile even the most popular optimism could not deny the fact. What it could (and apparently did do) was to assert that *all* Israel would be assembled. This is in notable contrast with the view of Amos that Israel should be winnowed among the nations. The answer is given in chapter iii., "And I said," etc., in two counts each beginning "Hear, I pray you" (iii. 1 and 9). In reply to the contention that all Israel shall be gathered Micah asserts that Jerusalem itself shall be made a ruin. That this view is correct is proved by Jeremiah xxvi. 18 f. which shows that the prophecy dates from the reign of Hezekiah (727-698), i.e. after the first deportation from Israel. Micah ii.-iii. are then a single prophecy. The text has, however, suffered considerably in transmission.

It does not appear possible for anybody to-day to assert definitely that Micah iv. f. is so disjointed that it could not have proceeded from the prophet's pen in something like its present form. We know too little of the limits of permissible incoherence that a Hebrew prophet was bound to observe. But it is obvious that as it stands the passage is extremely difficult and that many of the difficulties can be removed by a simple hypothesis which arises naturally from the facts of the case and what is known of the vicissitudes of MS. tradition; and it is in order to put forward such a hypothesis tentatively. I suggest therefore that leaves of the oracles became tattered in transmission, and possibly also deranged, with the result that the remaining fragments, chiefly as the result of accident, were arranged in the wrong order. The fragments appear to relate to three different topics, and may be sorted out accordingly as follows:

<i>Messianic.</i>	<i>Doubtful.</i>	<i>Age of Micah.</i>	<i>Babylonian Captivity.</i>
iv. 1-7	v. 1-3 (2-4), 6-8 (7-9)	Aiv. 9, 11-14 (v. 1) Bv. 4f. (5f.) C9-14 (10-15)	iv. 10, 8.

To begin with the last and smallest group. While iv. 9 is an argument designed to *encourage*, iv. 10 begins with a most *discouraging* threat. It is at least inconsistent to say "Why dost thou cry aloud? Is there no king . . . that pangs have taken hold, etc.," and in the next breath to urge the city to feel pangs. And if the presence of a king and counsellor "in thy midst" is a reason for confidence, how can the argument have as its sequel an assurance of exile? On the other hand, 11-14 (v. 1) while it does not attach to iv. 10, continues the process of encouragement and forms a suitable sequel to 9. It seems therefore that iv. 10 is out of place. Again, iv. 8 is not an introduction to 9. In iv. 8 the kingdom is to come to Jerusalem; in 9 there is a king in its midst; it speaks of a period in which Jerusalem has not fallen and in the prophet's view will not fall and need have no fear. Further, the text of iv. 8 is not in order. The Greek indeed actually reads "a kingdom *from Babylon* for the daughter of Jerusalem." Whether this is right or not, the verse is a clear promise of restoration to take place after Jerusalem had fallen. It thus forms an admirable sequel to iv. 10. There is no reason whatever for doubting that Micah should have given such an oracle at some period of his career. The objection has been taken that Jeremiah xxvi. 18 f. shows that iii. 12 was a conditional prophecy. That is perfectly true, but the fact that Micah at one time uttered a conditional prophecy is no reason for doubting that on some other occasion he had a vision dealing with a future captivity. I think therefore that we have in iv. 10, 8 a continuous oracle of Micah's. It may be incomplete, but there does not appear to be any reason for holding that it is certainly so.

We may take the oracles dealing with the age of Micah next. As they stand they are not continuous, and as we cannot say how much is missing no certain opinion can be formed as to their relationship. B appears to be a fragment of a larger oracle and not to be directly connected with either A or C. It is sufficient now to refer to the discussion of this passage above ¹ where its meaning is shown in the light of the historical evidence.

¹ See pp. 45 f.

The case with A is less clear, for the passage would fit either the Syro-Ephraimite War or Sennacherib's invasion. In iv. 13 we read "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples: and thou shalt devote their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth." That is rather highly coloured if it is an anticipation of any of the events of which we have historical knowledge. The "threshing" was accomplished, but not by the daughter of Zion. Nevertheless it does not go beyond what an oriental poet might naturally say. The suggestion of booty points to a hasty retreat. This certainly occurred in 701, and perhaps also on the earlier occasion. If this assignment of the passage is correct iv. 14b is probably a figurative statement of the insults to Ahaz or Hezekiah.

The third passage C, v. 9-14 (10-15), is a prediction of Hezekiah's reign, obviously written before he had ascended the throne.¹ It is marked by the vague expression "in that day," and the desertion of his troops, his loss of territory and fortresses and his religious reform and the divine castigation of Sennacherib's army are all grouped together in a way that is familiar in Hebrew prophecy. Its bearing and fulfilment are too obvious to call for comment.

Of iv. 1-7 little need be said. The only point of any substance that can be raised is whether the fine verse iv. 5 is at present in its right place. The connection with the context is not very good and it may be that it is really a fragment of some other oracle. On our present knowledge, however, I doubt whether its position can be improved.

This leaves us with two doubtful passages, v. 1-3 (2-4) and 6-8 (7-9). They may be Messianic. Equally, however, they may be rather exuberantly expressed predictions of Hezekiah's reign. If so, it would be possible to hold that with the exception of iv. 10, the passage iv. 9-v. 14 (15) is in its original order so far as it is not fragmentary. The decision in this case depends on the view taken of the amount of hyperbole for which an oriental poet may properly be responsible without violating the conventions of his art; and on that different minds may well differ.

¹ See p. 32.

Micah vi. f. presents similar phenomena pointing to further losses in transmission. The opening passage (vi. 1-5) is incomplete. It leads up to something that has not been preserved. What follows (6-8) begins abruptly but may possibly be complete. The next passage should perhaps have vii. 13 attached to it. It would be possible by combining a number of fragments to make a longer consecutive oracle, but it does not necessarily follow that such a restoration would be correct. We have already connected iv. 10, 8. They would join on to vii. 13 and vii. 11 f. would attach well to them.

Micah vii. 1 ff. finds a parallel in Isaiah i., which probably dates from the time of the Syro-Ephraimite war. But the evils of which complaint is made frequently recur and it is impossible to assign any certain date to the passage. A question has been raised about vii. 7. This may quite properly be attached to what precedes: but in view of the obvious fact that these chapters consist largely of fragments it may be that this was not its original location.

Verses 8-10 form another fragment of which the beginning is missing. The passage would fit the Syro-Ephraimite war, or the period of Sennacherib's campaign or (better than either) a picture of the Babylonian exile, but if 14 ff. constitutes the sequel, the last alternative is not probable, for the conclusion of the book points to the time after the loss of Bashan and Gilead (reading "show unto us" (הראנו) "for I will show him" (אראנו)) in verse 15. But nothing like certainty is attainable in these cases, and it is not desirable to embark on extensive and detailed technical discussion in this context. The difficulties of the book of Micah are in the main due to accidents in the textual transmission and are to a great extent irremediable on our present materials.

CHAPTER VIII

The Intermediate Prophets

THE allusions in the book of Joel are too vague to warrant any certain conclusion as to its date, and in fact the most diverse theories have been held. The concluding chapter iv. (iii.) would most naturally (though not necessarily) be assigned to a time immediately after 587 B.C. On the other hand, i.-ii. 27 appears to be the product of a time when Jerusalem was still standing. We have not a particle of evidence as to the duration of Joel's prophetic activity. He may have written the whole book in a few hours (though this is *prima facie* unlikely) or it may contain utterances from different periods of his life. Hence, even if it were certain that the last chapter is exilic, it would not follow that the book was not by a single hand. In these circumstances all that can be said is that the concrete predictions as to Egypt and Edom (iv. (iii.) 19) ¹ were fulfilled, and that Judah and Jerusalem have been populated from 538 B.C. onwards.

Of Obadiah and Nahum nothing more need now be said.²

Zephaniah needs further discussion. We have already considered the predictions of Zephaniah ii. 4-11.³ In ii. 12 we read "Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword." The facts are stated by Breasted as follows:

Psamtik II (*circa* 593-588 B.C.) . . . "turned his attention southward and attempted the recovery of Nubia lost to Egypt since the foundation of the Ethiopian kingdom. He invaded lower Nubia, and an advanced body of his troops pushed up almost to the second cataract where they left a record of their visit at Abu Simbel, in a Greek inscription on one of the colossi of Rameses II, before his great temple there." ⁴

¹ See pp. 77 ff., 75.

² See pp. 18 f., 61, 63.

³ See pp. 66, 74.

⁴ Breasted, *History*, p. 585.

While the invasion did not result in a permanent absorption of any part of Nubia by Egypt, it seems to have led the Ethiopian kings to transfer their capital from Napata to Meroe further south.¹

Then comes a prophecy against Nineveh which has been treated elsewhere.²

In many cases higher critical theories are invoked to solve difficulties which are purely due to the state of the text. Sometimes it is possible with the materials at our disposal to restore the original with greater or less certainty. In other places they are merely sufficient to show that there is corruption without enabling us to see what the original reading was. Thus Driver after discussing the critical theories of Zephaniah dismisses most of them, but adds: "ii. 7*b* (from *for*), 11, iii. 9-13, 18-20 are so imperfectly connected with the context that they are very probably later additions."³

The text of ii. 6 *f.* is not in order. It is clear from the Greek that חבל, coast, in ii. 6*a* was originally חבל הים, coast of the sea. The second word having been omitted by accident, the full phrase was written in the margin and taken into the text at the wrong point. Further the Vulgate is probably right in omitting "Crete" in the same verse. We can then render the Hebrew, "And thou shalt be pastures for shepherds and folds for flocks." It is true that in verse 7 there is then a lack of connection, but all that is needed is a transposition thus: 6, 7*b*, 7*a*, 7*c*, with a slight amendment of the pronominal suffix.

"6. And thou shalt be pastures for shepherds and folds for flocks. 7*b*. On thee shall they feed: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they couch in the evening. 7*a*. And the sea coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah. 7*c*. For the Lord their God will visit them and bring again their captivity." With these changes all difficulty disappears.

In ii. 11 again the Greek had a slightly different text which yields a connection that is quite satisfactory for a poet or prophet. It renders "The Lord hath appeared (reading נראה for נורה) unto them and will destroy

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 561, 585. ² See pp. 62 *f.* ³ *Op. cit.* pp. 342 *f.*

(? ויכרית for כי רזה).” Here therefore we have no ground for any divisive hypothesis.

In the case of iii. 9 f. rather different considerations apply. It is true that in verse 10 we have a phrase which is textually doubtful, but the difficulty (such as it is) of reconciling these verses with the context is not due to that but to a misunderstanding. The argument is that a Divine judgment will come and is to be regarded as desirable. It will, to be sure, have terrible consequences, consuming the whole earth with the fire of God’s jealousy (ver. 8), but that will only burn away what is bad (1) among the nations (9 f.) and (2) in Jerusalem. In both cases it will be a purificatory process, and for both it will operate for the benefit of the good.

With regard to iii. 18 ff. the first two words of verse 18 are admittedly corrupt, but the Greek reads “as on a day of feast” and joins the words to the preceding verse. This is very generally accepted and gives a thoroughly satisfactory sense. The rest of the verse was damaged in the copy from which the Greek translation was made and no certain restoration can now be suggested. But that is no reason for doubting that the original text before any corruption took place was by Zephaniah.

A singularly perverse attempt has been made to identify the day of the Lord foretold by Zephaniah with the (supposed) danger to Jerusalem from a possible Scythian invasion in about 627 B.C. For this there is no evidence whatever and the real reason for the suggestion is to be found in an endeavour to discredit the supernatural. It is discussed below¹ in the case of Jeremiah. The exile had been foretold years before by Isaiah and Micah and indeed Moses himself,² and so had the return. The narrative in 2 Kings xxii. makes it clear that even Josiah’s reform was not regarded as sufficient to save the people from the consequences of their sin. The only mitigation was that Josiah was promised burial in Jerusalem.³ Jeremiah (xv. 4) took the same view. How then could any prophet of the age who was deserving of being regarded as

¹ See pp. 127 f.

² See pp. 12, 57 f., etc.

³ 2 Kings xxii. 20: so read with old Greek authorities for the “peace” of MT, see *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct. 1920, p. 383.

a true prophet and passed the test of Deuteronomy xviii. fail to understand that the danger was *not* from the Scythians in 627 B.C.? What Zephaniah foretold came to pass. The contemporaries who formed the first generation of those who thought his work worthy of preservation and had the power and duty of judging it held that he did not refer to the Scythians. Nobody arguing on very imperfect knowledge twenty-four centuries later can successfully dispute such a verdict. We do not even know at what point in Josiah's reign the oracle was delivered or what the material facts were at the time.

The prophecy of Habakkuk receives interesting monumental illustration. In ii. 17 we read, "For the violence done to Lebanon shall cover thee, and the destruction of the beasts, which made them afraid; because of men's blood, and for the violence done to the land, to the city and to all that dwell therein." Here are excerpts from Nebuchadrezzar's account of his campaign in the Lebanon.

"With the power of Nabu and Marduk, my lords, I ordered my troops to march to the Lebanon. The enemy, above and below, I drove out, and made the heart of the land to rejoice, its scattered people I gathered, and brought them back to their place. . . . The people in the Lebanon I made to dwell in peace and safety." ¹

The prophet obviously takes a different but more correct view than the royal scribe of the benefits conferred on the district by the Chaldeans. For another inscription of the same king says "of the people inhabiting Anti-Lebanon . . . their heads he beat off . . . [upon poles] he hung," ² which shows that atrocities were committed.

It is evident that chapters i. and ii. fall into two parts: The first consists of a dialogue between the prophet (i. 2-4) and God (5-11). In the second we have another dialogue, i. 12-ii. 1 falling to the prophet and ii. 2-20 being the reply. It seems to me a mistake to endeavour to divide the woes from the rest of the chapter. The prophecy is very difficult, partly because of textual trouble but mainly because it was intended to be obscure. In ii. 6 the Hebrew seems to mean "an interpretation, a riddle to him." For some reason, then, the prophet deliberately expressed

¹ Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 366.

² *Op. cit.* p. 370.

himself in enigmatic language. It may, of course, have been as a measure of precaution through fear that if he predicted too openly the woes that would befall the Chaldeans he would suffer punishment at their hands, or there may have been some other motive. In any case the first points to be mastered are that the oracle is intentionally obscure and that it is mainly directed against the Chaldean power. But this does not appear to have been its sole object. It may be that the prophet's question really consists of two complaints: (1) the way in which within the Jewish nation the righteous suffers at the hand of the wicked while God appears to be inactive (i. 13); and (2) the sufferings inflicted on the peoples of the Near East by the Chaldeans. There are two answers. It is explained that in spite of apparent delays in the Divine Justice (ii. 3) the righteous shall live in My (Greek) or his (Hebrew) faithfulness (4*b*)—perhaps a prediction of life everlasting—while in the earlier part of the verse, which seems to have suffered in transmission, a reply was given as to the wicked. The second answer deals with the second complaint. It foretells the fall of Babylon. The prophet personifies the Chaldean nation in the king. He thinks especially of Nebuchadrezzar's campaigns and policy towards conquered nations and the measures adopted for building and populating Babylon, of the idolatrous worship of the Chaldeans and the final failure of the idols to enable Nabonidus to resist the Persians. "Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and of the violence done to the land, to the city and to all that dwell therein" (ii. 8).

Thus while the oracles are not easy in detail their general purport seems sufficiently clear.

As this book is written from a critical and historical standpoint the amount of space devoted to the various prophets stands in no relation either to the length of their extant works or to their spiritual and intellectual importance. This of course is not due to any lack of appreciation of the aspects of their activity which have meant most to mankind. But it is realised that so long as the genuineness of their claim to supernatural inspiration is in doubt, it is impossible to derive the fullest measure of benefit

from that for which we value them most. It is for this reason that comparatively little will be said about Jeremiah. His book is the longest in the Bible. In proportion to its length it raises very few critical problems of any solidity apart from the question opened by the differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts which falls outside our scope. Historically he deals in the main with the fate of the city and kingdom and with episodes of the period for many of which he is the sole authority. If it were sought to treat of his predictions of the action of the Chaldeans and the fate of Jerusalem it would be necessary to consume a great deal of space in slaying the slain: for either quotation or summary could only be directed to showing what is not seriously disputed—viz. that they were fulfilled. On the other hand most of the predictions which the rationalists claim as unfulfilled have been more appropriately treated in other connections. It is proposed therefore only to offer a few remarks on points of some importance.

In a number of cases a perverse exegesis has endeavoured to make out that Jeremiah in predicting the enemy from the north was referring not to the Chaldeans but to the Scythians. This has been excellently answered by Professor A. Condamin.¹ A recent English commentator takes the extraordinary course of referring some oracles to the Scythians in his introduction and claiming that "Jeremiah's credit as a prophet must have been severely shaken," while pointing out in his notes that the passages suit the Chaldeans much better!² Obviously we have to deal here with nothing more than a determination to deny that Jeremiah was a prophet of truth. The oracles suit the Chaldeans but not the Scythians, and if uttered of the former were literally fulfilled. Contemporaries who were able to test Jeremiah's meaning, if necessary, by questions and oral explanations held him to be a true prophet. That was because his predictions had been fulfilled before their eyes. Rationalist criticism therefore is reduced to suggesting without a particle of evidence

¹ *Le Livre de Jérémie* [1920], pp. 61–7, cp. P. Volz, *Der Prophet Jeremia* [1922], pp. 57 f.

² L. E. Binns, *Jeremiah* [1919], pp. xxx., 9, 39, 51 f.

that originally the predictions referred to the Scythians and were altered to apply to the Chaldeans. In spite of this contemporaries accepted them. That the criticism should be reduced to such straits is the best evidence of the cogency with which the facts prove supernaturalism.

Nor again is there any force in Kuenen's contention that Jeremiah could not have remembered what he had actually said at the time that the predictions were committed to writing.

A great deal has been made of the prophecy of the seventy years (xxv. 11, xxix. 10). Both these passages fairly construed refer to the period of Chaldean supremacy which began in 605 B.C. with Nebuchadrezzar's great victory at Carchemish. It may be that we should regard seventy as a round number, satisfied by the period 605-538 B.C.; but personally I agree with those who consider it a non-arithmetical expression signifying simply a long time. On either hypothesis Jeremiah was right.

Far more importance attaches to a series of predictions in which the prophet foretells that God will make a full end of the peoples among which Israel was scattered, but not of Israel itself (xxx. 11, xlvi. 28), the perishing of false gods (x. 11), the conversion of heathens from foreign parts (xvi. 19 and iii. 17), and that those of Israel's neighbours who after their return from exile should worship God would be built among His people while the rest would be destroyed (xii. 16 f.). If ever predictions appeared to be contrary to all the probabilities of the times in which they were uttered these are they. In the last days of the Jewish state, when the overwhelming majority of the doomed people were themselves faithless to the God of Israel, such oracles must have seemed absolutely impossible of fulfilment. And yet we know that they came true. Where now is the Chaldean empire or its gods or Moab and Ammon? Edom was saved in Israel by its conversion and Israel itself survives. To it there came heathens from abroad.¹

We have already treated of the oracles as to Babylon which provide the most important of the critical questions

¹ See H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, iii., 5th Ed. 1905-6, *passim*, and especially pp. 402-408.

regarding Jeremiah's work.¹ An attempt has been made to deny his authorship of x. 1-16, but that a prophet who could utter iii. 17, xii. 16 f. and xvi. 19 should be unable to compose this oracle cannot seriously be maintained. Nor again is there the faintest probability in the suggestion that Jeremiah could not have been the author of xvii. 19-27. It is unnecessary to discuss such matters at length, because nothing is advanced that would constitute even a *prima facie* case in the eyes of anybody of ordinary sense and intelligence.

Much of what has been said of Jeremiah applies equally to Ezekiel. It is admitted that his predictions about Jerusalem, etc., were literally fulfilled, but it is claimed that they must be *vaticinia post eventum*. The ground taken, as already stated,² is that he proved wrong about Tyre and Egypt. With the vindication of the truth of these predictions, the opposition to him largely collapses, and other matters have been treated in appropriate connections.³

There are however two portions of Ezekiel that require separate mention, viz. xxxviii. f. and the concluding chapters. The meaning of the remarkable prophecy as to Gog of the land of Magog is far from clear, but in working on the subject I have been unable to avoid the suspicion that the prophet is here foretelling events connected with the end of the Persian Empire and that if we only had a reliable history of the time we should find that Gog was Artaxerxes Ochus. Our information however is far too confused and doubtful for such a view to be put forward with any definiteness, and we must be satisfied with saying that we do not know what the prophet means or even whether he is speaking of time which is now past or future.

Ezekiel xl.-xlviii. stands on a different footing. It is professedly a vision. The prophet narrates what he saw and heard. It contains ideal elements that could not be

¹ See pp. 87 ff.

² See p. 80.

³ Ezekiel speaks of the captivity of Sodom and foretells a restoration in xvi. 46 ff. Nothing is known of this, but the chapter perhaps implies that a settlement known as Sodom had existed before the exile on or near the site of the city that was destroyed in Abraham's time.

translated into reality. What it meant is a matter that his contemporaries could determine better than anybody else. It may be doubted whether they regarded it as a prediction in the ordinary sense, i.e. as a statement that what he saw would be translated into literal reality in this world. Certainly, so far as we know, the regulations it contains were never regarded as binding. It would rather seem to express an ideal of holiness worked out in architectural and legal terms, intended to influence the people by its qualities as an ideal than a prediction. For this reason I refrain from treating it in the way which seems appropriate for predictions.

CHAPTER IX

The Prophet of Consolation and the Post-exilic Prophets

IT is very generally believed that Isaiah xl.-lv. is the work of a prophet who lived in Babylonia and may properly be called the prophet of consolation. These chapters depict Israel as being in exile, oppressed by Babylonia, and awaiting deliverance at the hands of Cyrus. This appears to me convincing and I unhesitatingly accept the Babylonian origin of these chapters.

The next question to consider is whether Isaiah lvi.-lxvi. belongs to the prophet of consolation. Formerly the whole of xl.-lxvi. was treated as the work of one author. Now it is the fashion to attribute the last chapters either to one "trito-Isaiah," or to a diversity of prophets. Skinner's presentation of the case may be quoted :

"In 1892 Duhm propounded the bold yet illuminating solution that the whole of the third division of the book (chaps. lvi.-lxvi.) was written about a century after the Exile by a prophet whom he named the Trito-Isaiah. In the assumption of a single author for all these discourses Duhm has not been generally followed; but in distinguishing them sharply from chapters xl.-lv., in assigning them wholly to the post-exilic age, and also (for the most part) in bringing down their date to about the middle of the fifth century, he has been supported by the great majority of subsequent critics."¹

A critical examination of the facts is however fatal to the theory in any of its forms.

1. There is no certain evidence whatever that at any time there were prophetic books without any sort or kind

¹ J. Skinner, *Isaiah, Chapters xl.-lxvi.* [1922], pp. xxviii f.

of title or label or other designation. In the pages of modern writers much may be read about "anonymous prophecies," but there is no support for this in the form of the writings. Even if the author's name were missing there was presumably some introductory heading or other. Every one of the three major and twelve minor prophets has a title or introductory statement of some kind. The same applies to Zechariah ix. 1, which opens the works of the other prophet at present included in the same book as that of the descendant of Iddo. It is very likely, as we have seen, that we owe Zechariah ix.-xiv. to another Zechariah son of Jeberechiah. If so, it was the fact that this was *not* anonymous that led to its present location. But in any case it clearly had a title of some sort. In prophetic books we often find additional titles to separate parts of the works, e.g. Habakkuk iii. 1, Isaiah and Jeremiah *passim*. The only certain instance of a prophet who at present has neither name nor title at the beginning of his work is the prophet of consolation, and as Isaiah xl. 1 begins so abruptly that we do not even know who is addressed, it is very probable that there is a lacuna. In the absence of clear evidence that there ever was a prophetic book which when in its original state bore no heading or colophon or label or other means of designation or identification, it cannot be regarded as probable that the practice of issuing books in such a form ever existed.

2. Isaiah lvi.-lxvi. like xl.-lv. is work of the very first quality. In grandeur, sublimity, spiritual insight and religious power it reaches a level that is seldom attained and never surpassed by any biblical writer. That the Jews should have thrown up one such genius as the prophet of consolation in addition to Moses and the two or three writing prophets who occasionally touch the same level is not remarkable. That an accident of transmission should have rendered him anonymous places no strain on our credulity. But it is far more improbable that there should have been two authors of this calibre and that both should have become anonymous, though in the second case no accident or other plausible hypothesis can be suggested. And the theory becomes ludi-

crous when it is sought to substitute a procession of Trito-Isaiahs all producing a few verses of the greatest literature and nothing more, all anonymous, all incapable of writing a heading or colophon.

3. It is alleged that these chapters presuppose a re-established community inhabiting Jerusalem and using a rebuilt temple. We must therefore examine them to see the historical position presupposed. In lvii. 13 f. we read "but he that putteth his trust in Me shall possess the land, and shall inherit My holy mountain. And he shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of My people." That is intelligible only on the view that the land is *not yet* possessed and the holy mountain *not yet* inherited. Similar remarks apply to lviii. 12, 14; lix. 20; lx. 2, 4, 9 f., 15, 20 f. In every case we may add the comment that what is here predicted has *not yet* happened. This and the final words of lx. 22, "I the Lord will hasten it *in its time*," govern the meaning of the verses in the same chapter that speak of the sanctuary, "they shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory," 7; cp. 13. These equally refer to the future and do not imply that the sanctuary already exists. Similarly with the next chapter, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (lxi. 1). "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations" (4). In lxi. 3, R.V. speaks of "them that mourn *in Zion*," but this is a mistranslation. The Hebrew has "the mourners of Zion," which means those that mourn for Zion and does not imply that they are in it. In verse 7 "in their land they shall possess double" suggests that the settlement is still future. Other passages with precisely the same implication of referring to something still unfulfilled leave the same impression. See lxii. 1, 4 f., 8 f., 12. If these do not mean that the land is still desolate, the people still unredeemed, the city still forsaken, it is

very difficult to know what natural sense can be derived from them. Another passage is lxiii. 18 f. It is true that stress is laid on the statement that the possession of Israel had been for a little while, and it is suggested that the phrase is inapplicable to the period of three or four centuries from David or the building of the Temple to 587 B.C. That would have but little weight in dealing with a poet, but as a matter of fact the phrase is literally true. In the life of the city the period of Israel's occupation was indeed only a little while. See further lxiv. 10 f.; lxv. 9 f., 18 f., 21 f. These passages surely speak for themselves; and it is difficult not to see predictions of a future restoration in portions of lxvi. (see lxvi. 7-9, 10-16, 20).

What is there to set against this volume of evidence? A few misunderstood passages only. In lvi. 1-8, the prophet says "my salvation is near to come and my righteousness to be revealed." That naturally means that the deliverance from exile is not yet accomplished but may be expected in the near future. When that occurs, proselytes who have really entered the covenant wholeheartedly will share in the return and be brought to the future temple like Israelites: for in addition to the outcasts of Israel who will be restored, aliens will also be gathered to national and religious union with the people in its own land. There is nothing there that points to post-exilic date. Another passage is Isaiah lxvi. In 1-4 the prophet appears to be protesting energetically against the erection of some temple and its actual or projected sacrifices. Then in 5 he turns to some other party who had been faithful to God and had consequently been cast out by certain opponents who were their brethren. These opponents had said incredulously "Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy." The prophet predicts that the result will rebuke their lack of faith. "They shall be ashamed." How will this come about? "A voice of tumult from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to His enemies" (6). In other words there will be fighting in the city centering about the temple. The sequel will be the painless and unprecedented rebirth of the holy land, bringing comfort and joy as the result of the divine

intervention (manifesting itself in the Persian campaigns). What then are the temple against the erection of which the prophet protests, the two parties, and the city and temple connected with the fighting? The obvious explanation is that there was a proposal to build a temple of the Lord in or near Babylon. This led to violent divisions of opinion in the community. Its supporters held that the exile was permanent and a Jewish restoration out of the question. The prophet was strongly opposed to this idea and violently denounces temple and sacrifices. He assures the orthodox party that events will prove how right they were in their faith for the future. The city in which the voice of tumult is heard is Babylon and it too contained the temple, which is not a temple of God.¹ It is probable that Isaiah lxvi. was written considerably earlier than some of the other chapters of the prophet of consolation at a time when ordinary observers could not discern the eventual triumphs and policy of Cyrus.

It is further claimed that the existence of the Temple is presupposed in lx. 7, lxii. 9, and lxv. 11. The first two passages are *prediction* of what will happen and do not imply the present existence of the sanctuary. The third is a rebuke to those who in exile abandon the worship of God and forget His true sanctuary, adopting instead the cult of Gad. Then it is sought to make lvi. 8 mean that there has already been a partial return. "The Lord God Which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside his own that are gathered." That is not the natural sense of the passage. It only foretells that God will re-establish Israelites and with them certain strangers.

It is contended that the social conditions and the cleavage into two parties, one strict and the other lax in religious matters, are specially characteristic of the post-exilic period. That is not so. There is nothing distinctively post-exilic in either. The social conditions were much the same for many centuries and are just as much those of the Jews in Babylonia as of the post-exilic Jews. Nor has there ever in any age been a Jewish community in which there did not exist a cleavage into

¹ See pp.* 85 ff.

two parties, one strict and the other lax. Indeed we have already seen to what this and the idolatrous worship rebuked by the prophet refer. A more specious argument can be raised on Isaiah lvii. 3-13. But 13b, 14 makes the exilic position clear, "but he that putteth trust in Me shall possess the land and shall inherit My holy mountain. And he shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of My people." It is obvious therefore that in lvii. 3-13 the prophet is addressing representatives of an Israelite or Jewish community settled in a part of the Babylonian dominions which, unlike Babylon, was remarkable for valleys (3 ff.). They were characterised by a peculiarly abominable form of worship, involving idolatry, child sacrifice and immorality.¹ Lastly attention is drawn to lix. 1-15 as evidence that the promised redemption was delayed, and it is claimed that this feeling could not have arisen between the date of Isaiah xl. and the end of the exile. The fact is that these chapters are not in chronological order. Much of lvi.-lxvi. appears to belong to a rather earlier period of the exile than xl. The recognition that these chapters were written in Babylon before the triumph of Cyrus was imminent disposes of all that has been urged by the critics on this head and from a theological standpoint. As to the linguistic arguments advanced they are so flimsy and fanciful as to give the appearance of trifling.

It seems unnecessary in view of what has been said to dwell further on Isaiah lvi.-lxvi. Of the earlier chapters some remarks may properly be made. Babylonia met the fate predicted in xlvi. f. Cyrus in fact did what the prophet expected of him. It is generally recognised that they belong to the very end of the exile and that the predictions as to the future were in the main fulfilled.

There are certain more detailed predictions that require a passing notice. The subjugation of Egypt, Ethiopia

¹ Some have strangely tried to find here allusions to the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. But there is not the smallest reason to think that Samaritan worship was ever characterised by these grave abuses. Their Pentateuch, as is well known, does not differ from the Jewish in respect of these matters.

and Seba¹ (Isa. xliii. 3 f.) by the Persians did in fact take place in the reign of Cambyses.² The same three names occur in xlv. 14, where however it is somewhat difficult to make sure who is addressed.

A curious point is made on xlv. 3 f. by Skinner. He has somehow convinced himself that this means that Cyrus will come to acknowledge the Lord "as the true God and the author of his success." As verse 4 explicitly says that in spite of the calling by the name, "thou hast not known Me," it is obvious that that is not the meaning. On the other hand the fulfilment of the prediction would bring recognition at any rate from Israelites all over the civilised world of God's exclusive power (ver. 6).

Isaiah xlix. 23 has frequently been misunderstood. It is undoubtedly cast in very oriental language. The previous verse announces the restoration of Israel. When it is added that "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet," the meaning after hyperbole has been stripped off is that the restoration shall take place under royal sanction and protection. This came about. Similarly with Isaiah lx. 10-16.

It is well known that in the post-exilic period there were many converts to Judaism and predictions like lvi. 8, lx. 3 were literally fulfilled.

Much of the prophet's language is hyperbolic when tested by the comparison with modern western prose. It is therefore important that we should remember how marvellous a feat his prediction really was having regard to the position at the time he wrote. He addressed himself primarily to a community of exiles belonging to a broken people whose importance from any but a spiritual standpoint was negligible, compared to the great powers of the day. He belonged to a mere section of this community which was faithful to the true national and religious ideal and found himself confronted in it with powerful

¹ According to Josephus, *Ant.*, II. x. §2, 249, this is Meroe, the northern province of Ethiopia.

² See J. v. Prašek, *Geschichte der Meder und Perser* I [1906], pp. 250-6.

opposition and exposed to ill-treatment (Isa. i. 6). The vogue of idolatry was strong in Israel, and all but universal elsewhere, and nowhere except among an insignificant body of Jewish exiles was there any belief in monotheism. Yet he could foretell with the utmost confidence not merely the coming glories of his race in the next six centuries, but the ultimate triumph of that One God Whom he served. His cause must have seemed hopeless to any impartial observer, and yet he announced in the clearest accents "By Myself have I sworn, righteousness is gone forth from My mouth, a word which shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (xlv. 23). If to-day, after the lapse of centuries, we look round the world and measure the relative forces of monotheism, polytheism and idolatry as compared with what they were in the prophet's time, we can see that while the prediction has not yet been fulfilled, the issue has in reality been decided. To-day the ultimate fate of the superstition against which the prophet fought is no longer in doubt, and the time for the final realisation of his oracles is perceptibly less distant.

There are two other chapters in the book which are perhaps from the hand of the prophet of consolation, viz. Isaiah xxxiv.-xxxv. While no certainty is possible, they strongly recall him alike in tone, style and historical presuppositions. It is of course perfectly possible that after his work had been added to that of Isaiah the chapters were moved to their present position. If for example it were found that a roll could conveniently take more than Isaiah i.-xxxiii., but not as much more as the contents of xxxvi.-xxxix., there would have been reason to place these chapters in their present position. Where all must be guess-work this seems the simplest hypothesis.

As to the reasons for the addition of the work of the prophet of consolation to Isaiah's nothing definite can be said. Isaiah xl. opens abruptly without any indication of the persons to whom it is addressed. It looks therefore as if the initial words of the prophecy including the title had been lost. That is not the only possible view, but there is no point in spinning hypotheses. Where nothing can be proved, it is sufficient merely to put forward a

single possibility which accords with the known probabilities of MS. tradition.

In the light of the inscriptions of Darius Haggai is treated with greater respect nowadays than was formerly the case. The discussion by Professor H. G. Mitchell in the *International Critical Commentary* is a sign of this. The shaking of the nations foretold in ii. 6 was in fact fulfilled in the redoubtable revolts that Darius was called upon to meet in the early years of his reign. The chronology is not quite certain, but when the dating of Haggai's prophecies is compared, it seems reasonable to infer that the worst dangers had not yet arisen in their completeness at the time the prophet gave his message. A perusal of Ezra vi. shows that ii. 7 ff. was in the main fulfilled within a short time, though of course the full realisation of the promises was deferred for some centuries.

It is however suggested that ii. 23 is a promise of independence. This appears to be contradicted by all the known facts. The position of the small and struggling community in Jerusalem forbade the notion. It was a day of small things (Zech. iv. 10). And if it had been so understood by contemporaries who knew the situation, would they have regarded Haggai as a responsible person? Or would they have preserved oracles that had been so flagrantly contradicted by the event as revelations of God? These questions admit of but one answer. The prophet was understood to mean that in the upheaval which was about to take place Zerubbabel would meet with no misfortune but would flourish.

One other point. Haggai ii. 21 is sometimes regarded as a prediction that Darius would lose his throne. On the other hand Darius himself claims that he captured no fewer than nine kings.¹ We only have his own account of his campaigns. If we had information from the other side, the facts might look rather different from what they do in his inscriptions. There is some chronological uncertainty as to the precise dates of the different campaigns. But surely there can be no doubt that some of them would exactly suit the language of Haggai. The case against this prophet therefore falls to the ground.

¹ Weissbach, *op. cit.* p. 59, §62 of the Behistun inscription.

That the prediction of Zechariah i. 17 that the cities through prosperity should yet be spread abroad was literally fulfilled is notorious. Similarly with viii. 1 ff. It is true that Kuenen has written a certain amount in disparagement of this prophet, but the fact is that anybody reading the oracles with an impartial mind will be indisposed to cavil at anything except one passage. Of the conversions of the post-exilic period foretold in Zechariah ii. 15 (11), we have already taken note.¹ On the other hand, Zechariah viii. 23 may well be regarded as a prediction relating to a more remote future that has not yet been attained.

The one difficulty is provided by vi. 9-15. It is clear that 12-15 refers to Zerubbabel (compare 13 with iv. 9). Yet what precedes deals in the Hebrew with crowns (not *a* crown) and the high priest only. There is thus some plausibility in the idea that originally the text mentioned Zerubbabel. Nevertheless it is not necessarily correct. The real object of the prophet appears to be to avoid or perhaps to compose strife between the two leaders. "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (vi. 13). Zerubbabel was to have the privilege of doing the things that were best worth doing, and to prevent this from proving too bitter a pill for the high priest the crowns are to provide a little gilding. That seems to be the true interpretation of the passage.

There is no serious critical question regarding Malachi. The date of this prophet is not known, but only inferred, and there is no external information to illuminate his prophecy. Thus it does not fall within the purview of this book.

¹ See p. 128.

CHAPTER X

The Conventions of Prophecy

WE have now traversed the ground on which the principal struggle between supernaturalism and rationalism is fought. The facts so clearly attest the presence of something which transcends ordinary human powers that it would be a waste of words to argue the case for supernaturalism. *Res ipsa loquitur*.

There are, however, certain other aspects of the phenomena presented which call for consideration. The writings of the prophets are of necessity couched in the idiom of their own times and countries. The inscriptions show that their language was very much nearer to the current speech of their age than is sometimes realised. Figures that may strike us as unusual were the ordinary methods of expression. Sometimes this creates no trouble, but there are occasions where any modern reading them in the light of what seems natural to him will inevitably be misled. An important illustration of this truth is provided by such an expression as "in the midst of the sea"¹ applied to a continental town.

The prophets were also poets and this in itself involves a further deviation from the methods of expression that characterise prose. It is difficult to believe that there ever was a time when the language of the most obscure portions of the prophets was either current coin or readily comprehensible by the bulk of the people. Not merely were they poets; they were oriental poets; and in certain matters—particularly in respect of hyperbole—they are subject to the canons of oriental poetry. But there are

¹ See p. 71.

differences between them. Some appear to be nearer in matters of detail to the kind of statement that would be expected from a prose writer. If we take an oracle of Isaiah, who in some respects is one of the most poetical and difficult of the writers, strip off the imagery and state its exact effect in bald unvarnished prose, we shall be amazed at the wealth of accurate detail which characterises the prediction. On the other hand some other prophets who were more sparing of imagery and might therefore be expected to be better exponents of detail fall behind him in that respect. The message of each prophet is coloured by his personality, and that affects not merely the beauty of his style but also his power of conveying clear-cut impressions to the minds of his readers. If there is a divine element in prophecy it must be remembered that it found expression through a purely human medium, and that we are only human and in our turn may introduce unconscious error into our comprehension of the prophetic messages.

In the ages when prophecy was a living operative factor much must have been generally known that we can only ascertain, if at all, by careful study. One example of this is furnished by the conditional element. If we read Micah iii. 12 without any further knowledge it seems evident that the prophet is foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem as a definite certainty. Yet the information given by Jeremiah xxvi. 19 shows us that his contemporaries rightly rejected this idea. Why? Either they knew that there was a conditional element in prophecy, or else they made enquiries from Micah himself and ascertained that this was the fact. Probably they knew it, for it was one of the conventions of what was then a living art. The conditional character of predictions of woe and the power of effective repentance to avert the evil are taught over and over again in the Bible. It is enough to refer to the book of Jonah, Jeremiah xviii. 6-8, Ezekiel xviii., Zephaniah ii. 1-3,¹ Amos v. 15. Conversely a

¹ Cp. Kuenen, *op. cit.* p. 172, "The business of Zephaniah is not to predict *that which shall be*, but to depict *that which cannot fail to happen*, unless the people repent and forsake their sins" (Kuenen's italics).

promised blessing could be forfeited by bad conduct (1 Sam. ii. 30).

In this connection we may deal with what is really only another aspect of the same truth.

When it is realised that this was a dominant convention of prophecy it becomes impossible to hold with Kuenen¹ that there is any inconsistency between a threat of coming disaster that is couched in absolute terms and one that is qualified by expressions that show that effective repentance would avail to avert the evil. It is easy enough to say that in Jeremiah xxv. the prophet threatens unconditionally and in xxxvi. dated in the same year suggests that repentance may bring forgiveness (vers. 2 f.) and holds to that view (xxxvi. 7). In form, Micah iii. 12 is as unconditional as Jeremiah xxv. and yet we know that in substance it was held to be conditional by virtue of an established convention governing prophecy from the earliest writing prophets to the latest. Where then is the inconsistency? In Jeremiah xxxvi. we have expressed in words what in virtue of a general law was merely implied in Jeremiah xxv.

In reality an alternation between threats expressed absolutely but subject to the implied condition which is always present in prophecies of woe and threats expressed conditionally is a mere matter of language, not of the meaning intended, or actually conveyed to contemporaries, and the possibility of misunderstanding the prophet as Kuenen does is simply due to the change in the surrounding circumstances. Jeremiah taught in an atmosphere of which the conventions of prophecy formed part: his critics live in times in which they are not understood. That is all.

A conditional prophecy may obviously be delivered either at a time when the people are not too far set in evil ways to be able to abandon them, or at a time when the effort involved in effective repentance is known by the prophet to be too great. The failure to realise this is made the ground of a further attack on Jeremiah.² Kuenen apparently thinks that there is an inconsistency between conditional announcements of punishment and

¹ *Op. cit.* 336 f.

² Kuenen, *op. cit.* pp. 337 ff.

the statement that Jerusalem would be destroyed for Manasseh's sins (Jer. xv. 4-6). That is to misunderstand the prophet. The meaning of what he says regarding Manasseh is that his sins had eaten too deeply into the people. A man may say without inconsistency "If you repent you will avert disaster, but to my knowledge you have gone too far to be able to rouse yourself to true repentance." He may or may not be right in his *facts*, but assuming that he is, there is no flaw in his *logic*. Jeremiah, of course, had opportunities for knowing the facts that are denied to us: but we have some corroborative evidence. Even after the fall of Jerusalem the worship of the queen of heaven had so strong a hold that a section of the people still refused to recognise God's exclusive power.

Kuenen however seeks to reinforce his theory of Jeremiah by references to two other passages. In Jeremiah xvii. 19-27 promise and threat are made dependent on the observance or non-observance of the sabbath, "If the words quoted indeed proceed from him, then it must be assumed that he wrote them down when he was wholly impressed with the sanctity of the sabbath rest; that having remarked the manifold violations of this one commandment, he for the moment makes everything dependent upon it."¹ And again he lays stress on Jeremiah xxxiv. 12-22. "This passage is remarkable also for another reason. The besieged had just before been guilty of scandalous perfidy; the promise to set free their male and female slaves, which had been made in the time of distress, had been retracted by them when the danger was passed. Jeremiah now announces the fall of Jerusalem *on the ground of the perjury of its inhabitants*. It is, therefore, self-evident that he thinks that fall inevitable. But is it not very remarkable, in connection with all that precedes, that here all stress is laid on this one fact, and the rest is lost sight of? The indignation which is shown there tends to the honour of the prophet; but is it not at the same time a striking proof that his subjectivity has an essential influence upon the contents of his predictions? Is it not as if in this elevation and depression, in this alternation of hope and fear, we hear the beating of his human heart?"² Yet

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 339 f.

² *Op. cit.* pp. 341 f.

when these passages are considered more closely it is plain enough that there is no inconsistency. Effective repentance—a repentance that is strong enough to sacrifice material profit to spiritual welfare—that was what in his view could save. It mattered nothing whether that manifested itself first over the sabbath or the slaves or any other sacrifice of personal interest to religious principle. Men who so far repented as to keep the sabbath to their own pecuniary loss would have undertaken the observance of the rest of the religion as a matter of course. A belief in God that is strong enough to ensure such a course of conduct automatically excludes the worship of other gods and the habitual violation of His law. In other words the hearts of stone would have been replaced by hearts of flesh. And Jeremiah knew this at least as well as any modern.

Another matter of vital importance to our understanding of prophecy is the treatment of the time element. Here it seems that various distinctions must be drawn.

There are a certain number of cases in which the limitations of the actual language employed lead to difficulty. Hebrew did not always distinguish clearly between permanence and perpetuity. The expression "everlasting" is used e.g. in Deuteronomy xv. 17 to denote permanent slavery. In no case could that have extended beyond the slave's life, and he would be a rash man who should venture to affirm that if, say, ten years after such a transaction as the slave law contemplates both master and slave desired that the slave "for ever" should become a freeman there is anything in the law that would prevent his manumission. The idea conveyed here is that of permanence, not of perpetuity.¹ It is not always possible to be sure how far this principle extends. Amos ix. 15 foretells that the people shall *no more* be plucked up out of their land. Something over six centuries after the return they were exiled. It may be that contemporaries would have understood Amos simply to mean that the restoration was to be permanent, not perpetual, but so far as we can tell, it is equally possible that his message was limited to announcing a permanent restoration and

¹ See further, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January, 1921.

that he had no knowledge of a second exile. It has already been observed¹ that it is no reflection on the genuineness of a message to say that the messenger's knowledge is limited to what he has to convey.

When allowance has been made within reasonable limits for the factors indicated we find that there are a certain number of predictions in which time is of the essence of the message. Thus Jeremiah (xxviii. 16) foretold that Hananiah would die during the current year. In that case time was all-important. Had Hananiah died two years later it would have been obvious that Jeremiah was not a prophet of truth. Again, time might be of the essence at one period and not at another. When the doom against Moab which is quoted in Isaiah xv. f. was originally pronounced, time was not of the essence. But when Isaiah added the epilogue (Isa. xvi. 13 f.) that which had previously been immaterial became of vital importance. Had Moab not met with disaster within the three years of his oracle, his prophetic position could not have been maintained. His words were too clear and the time was too short for doubt to be possible.

In many cases the question of time was and is utterly immaterial. From one point of view it mattered little to Jeremiah's contemporaries when precisely Babylon should meet her doom once they were satisfied that they must treat the exile as permanent so far as their own arrangements were concerned. But it was of supreme consequence to them whether Babylon was to remain triumphant for all time and whether or not there would be a future restoration. For prophecy provided the spiritual nourishment wherewith the best element in the nation was sustained. Many of the burdens of foreign nations were really aimed at strengthening the morale of Israel. Ammon, Moab, Babylon, Assyria, etc., with their idolatrous cults might be temporarily successful: Israel on the other hand might meet with calamity: yet whatever the appearances at any historical moment, sooner or later misfortune would overtake the idolatrous peoples, and in the last resort a doom, from which the remnant of Israel—the true bearer of its highest religious tradition—would be for ever exempt.

¹ See p. 104.

With variations according to the particular circumstances that is the kind of teaching they convey. Those predictions have been tried by the test of time and they have proved true. The event has shown Israel to be eternal while the heathen powers and the idolatrous cults have, contrary to all reasonable likelihood, passed away. And we must remember that the effect of these prophecies was to teach the lessons of endurance, steadfastness and hope.

There may often be a connection in thought linking two events that are separated in time. Jeremiah's oracles against Babylon provide an illustration of this. Babylon shall fall and become utterly deserted.¹ We have seen that these predictions were fulfilled in substance but that a great interval of time elapsed between the fall of Babylon and its final desolation.² Here, however, the train of thought is obvious. Mighty Babylon, the greatest power in the world to-day, is doomed to fall and to become a desert, but the scattered flock shall be brought to its pasture. In this way prophet after prophet groups in his thought events that belong to different years and even different periods. Thus Amos i. f. and Zechariah ix. 1-8 link together events of the Assyrian period, and Isaiah x. 33-xii. glances at the Chaldean invasion, the captivity and restoration under Zerubbabel and the successes of the Maccabean period. Nay, the connection in the prophet's thought is so intimate that under the phrase "in that day" he has no hesitation in putting together events that were separated by many centuries, leaping from Zerubbabel to the Maccabean period and back again to the return from exile (xi. 11 ff.). Doubtless the expression "in that day" had acquired a technical use in prophecy. It might be employed to denote an approximate date or it might be used to embrace a prolonged period. But even so the passage is a remarkable illustration of the point that it is sought to make.

Now we find predictions of this kind cheek by jowl with others in which time was certainly of the essence. Both the prophets and their contemporaries knew the importance of time in its proper place. Nevertheless the prophets did not hesitate to group events in a way that may almost

¹ See especially Jer. li. 29.

² Pp. 87 ff.

be said to defy the notion of time. In spite of this they were accepted as true prophets. It will be well for our immediate purpose to take an instance where contemporaries had the means of judging more nearly than was possible where the events foretold were centuries away. Hosea i. 4 f. runs thus : " And the Lord said unto him, call his name Jezreel ; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."

The destruction of the house of Jehu took place in *circa* 745 B.C., while the end of the Israelite kingdom falls at the earliest in 723 B.C. Hosea was accepted as a true prophet by the men who knew the facts, and judged him on them. Why? Surely because there was a convention perfectly well known to contemporaries. An arrangement of future events on the principle of a connection of thought is not in itself less logical or convenient than a chronological arrangement. If it be understood on what principle the prophet proceeds, no difficulty could arise either for contemporaries or for us. Once this is grasped the whole attack on the prophets for their treatment of the time element becomes a mere futile beating of the air. Their principle was not chronological ; but then they never professed that it was, and their contemporaries fully understood this. It would be easy to cite one illustration after another of the way in which the prophets were guided by the connection of thought, but it seems unnecessary. We must regard their work in the light of the fact that they were concerned with the future largely as the raw material from which they could fashion the necessary sustenance for the Jewish soul. When it is viewed from that standpoint all difficulties disappear.

CHAPTER XI

The Achievement of the Prophets

THE greater part of the concluding chapter of Kuenen's book need not detain us, for it rests on foundations which have already been demolished.¹ No competent enquirer who has studied the historical sources carefully and impartially can hold to-day that ethical monotheism was the creation of the prophets. But there is a last attack which can only be characterised as malignant and requires an answer. Kuenen² quotes a long passage from Bluntschli in condemnation of the work of the prophets for their own nation. It begins with the sentence "For public order and for policy, prophecy was the most intolerable and destructive phenomenon that can be imagined." Our author partially endorses this view.

It is not for nothing that I characterise this attitude of Kuenen's as malignant. According to his own showing in this very book "*Isaiah, by his faith, saved Judah,*" and of Jeremiah he writes: "*By its moral influence, his prophecy of Israel's restoration effected, or at least very powerfully promoted, that restoration itself.*"³ On Kuenen's

¹ On the criticism of the Pentateuch, see *Studies in Biblical Law, Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism, Pentateuchal Studies, The Origin of the Pentateuch, The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* and *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1914-1921. It is now beginning to be recognised in quarters formerly favourable to Kuenen that his positions are no longer tenable. See e.g., Professor M. Löhr's abandonment of the documentary theory, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, 1921, col. 124. On the early origin of monotheism, see *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct. 1907, July 1919, and July 1920.

² *Op. cit.* pp. 587 f.

³ *Op. cit.* pp. 298, 316 (Kuenen's italics).

view, then, the first-named prophet secured a continued existence of over a century for the Jewish state: the second was actually responsible for its rebirth and a subsequent territorial history of six centuries. For an author to say in the face of this that "for policy prophecy was the most intolerable and destructive phenomenon that can be imagined" is simply to proclaim his complete inability to offer a balanced judgment. What other phenomenon is there in all history that has produced such results without a drop of bloodshed?

Bluntschli further alleges that "the prophet . . . in the firm confidence that he revealed the will of God, demanded this or that specific political measure, according as his heart suggested to him, and when embittered by opposition, sometimes called to his aid the passions of the mob in order to carry into effect by violence the will of God which he had announced." That is not true. No prophet called to his aid the passions of the mob for this purpose. But it certainly is the case that the prophets like all reformers demanded the political measures they thought desirable. And so it must be in every society in which good men seek to remedy evil.

Let us endeavour to take a more measured view of their achievement in the light of the facts that our examination of the history has revealed. The prophets sought to influence the domestic affairs of the nation and its foreign policy. With regard to much of their teaching we have no knowledge of its immediate effects. We do not know whether their denunciations of social and economic evils operated to diminish them or at any rate to check or diminish their growth. But we have some knowledge of their struggle against idolatry and false gods and more of their influence on foreign policy. It cannot be doubted that under God the prophets saved Judah from the Assyrians. Had Isaiah's advice been followed throughout, the disasters that the Jews suffered at the hands of Sargon and Sennacherib would have been entirely avoided. If those in power had listened to Jeremiah, there need have been no fall of Jerusalem and no Babylonian exile. As it was, it cannot be doubted that the work of the prophets was a main factor in the maintenance of the morale of

both Israel and Judah. We have seen how there were two reunions of the northern and southern branches of the people.¹ Can it reasonably be doubted that the work of the prophets from Amos, Hosea and the older Zechariah down to the seers of the exile operated powerfully to ensure these? Is there no inference to be drawn from the fact that men of Bethel were among those who returned from the exile, that very Bethel which had been the seat of the calf worship but also the scene of the preaching of Amos? Can such predictions as those of the older Zechariah come to fulfilment without exercising a mighty influence on a people? As we survey the whole tragic history from the schism to the return, or, if it be preferred, to the present day, can it reasonably be doubted that without the work of the prophets religion and people must have disappeared entirely? And that brings us to the second part of their influence on policy. It was they, and they alone, who saved the religion with its monotheistic, ethical and moral teaching without which the nation too must have perished. Elijah met the danger of the submersion of the nation by the Phœnician religion single-handed. Without him all Israel must have abandoned the faith which alone preserved the nationality and those great principles without which the nationality would be worthless. Of Isaiah's achievement against Ashur we have spoken in an earlier chapter.² The recurring returns to a purer faith, notably the reforms of Hezekiah, must be attributed largely to the same influence. It is true that *without the exile* the prophets would have failed, but when this was added to their efforts the final result was the creation of a nation in which idolatry and polytheism could obtain no further hold and which stood for the worship of One God and the observance of His code of right conduct.

So much for their immediate influence on national policy. But who shall seek to estimate the effects of their teachings either on the lives of countless millions up to the present or on the policy of their people in crisis after crisis during the last twenty-five centuries? There are moments in the history of every individual and every community when a definite choice must be made between the evil

¹ See pp. 59 f., 98 ff.

² See pp. 40 ff.

that seems to have material success on its side and the good that ensures spiritual weal, often at the cost of heavy sacrifices. At such times men stand once more at Carmel: once more they face the question, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." None can appraise the value at such times of the great moral force generated for their people by an Elijah and an Isaiah and their fellows; for tradition and morale belong to the *imponderabilia* of life. We feel their power, but we cannot subject it to exact measurement. But it is not any the less on that account. In truth the prophets have succeeded in bequeathing to their own people a double portion of their own spirit. If the race has been able to survive the cessation of prophecy it is because one of their most marvellous predictions has been fulfilled. "And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord: My spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever" (Isa. lix. 21).

Of the work of the prophets for their own people it may seem unnecessary to say more, but yet in serving the world they were serving their own people too. From the first the ideal of Israel has had its universal side. The conception of a nation of priests receives its grandeur not merely from the idea of the service of God, but also from that of the service of man. The view of Israel, the servant of the Lord, given in Isaiah lii. 13–liii. 12 has proved in historical experience to be an entirely true forecast. Can it be said that the service to mankind was not worth while? Let us hear Kuenen himself for the last time.

"This result itself of their religious and moral life—without doubt the fruit of a contest often anxious, fruit ripened amid tears and prayers—makes us all their debtors. *Ethical monotheism* has been introduced by Christianity into the popular thought, and impressed on every one of us, even in his earliest youth. The privilege therein conferred upon us is very readily overlooked, because we have never experienced the want of it. But it becomes

obvious on the slightest reflection. Honour to those to whom we owe it! With respect to what some others have bestowed upon us, it can perhaps be asserted, not without cause, that it would have become our property even without them; it may in a certain sense be called accidental that they have become our benefactors; even although we conceive them never to have existed, we should still possess now that which through them has become our portion. This is not true of the ethical monotheism, for which we are indebted to Christianity, and ultimately to the prophets of Israel. It is true that even without their aid polytheism would perhaps have made way for the recognition and the worship of the one only God. About the beginning of the Christian era the population of the Roman Empire was prepared to embrace monotheism; it was already proclaimed and current in the schools of the philosophers; from these it began already to spread, not only among the educated classes, but also among the common people.¹ But the one God of heathenism was another than that of Israel; he was not like the latter—if I may so express myself—ethical to the very core. Certainly he had moral attributes also; in the system of some philosophers, in that of Plato, for instance, they come even prominently into the foreground. But it is very doubtful whether this would have been the case also in the popular belief, even though it were granted that it could have been developed on the ground of philosophical reflection. But, on the other hand, holiness, righteousness, mercy, formed the very nature of the God of the prophets. And—a thing which above all we must never lose sight of—that which they themselves possessed, and therefore could awaken in others also, was *religion*, no speculation, but a reality of life. The influence of philosophy would have been always more negative; it undermined polytheism, but it did not show at least that it could build anything better on its ruins. That better thing was produced by Israelitish prophecy.”²

And that is but half the story, for the other great

¹ E. Zeller, “Die Entwicklung des Monotheismus bei den Griechen” (*Vorträge und Abhandlungen*, 1865, pp. 1-29).

² *Op. cit.* pp. 590-1.

daughter religion, Islam, could never have come into being but for the work of the prophets.

The end is not yet. The full fruits of their labours have not yet been gathered. The events predicted have not all run their full course. The forces generated by the prophetic labours have not exhausted their activity. But even if the final reckoning fell to be made to-day, the work of the prophets would stand out as one of the most inspiring and withal one of the most tender episodes in the story of God's dealings with man.

APPENDIX I

The Chronological Scheme

THE backbone of the chronology of the period is provided by Assyria. In that country there existed a reckoning by eponym officials called *limmi*, and large fragments of chronological lists have come down to us. In one we have a note of an eclipse of the sun in the month of Sivan. "Astronomical investigations have shown that a total eclipse of the sun occurred at Nineveh, June 15, 763 B.C. . . . This astronomical calculation gave a fixed date for the year of that eponym and thereby fixed every year in the entire canon."¹

The following are the dates given by Rogers² and E. F. Weidner, *Die Könige von Assyrien* [1921], respectively for the Assyrian kings who are of importance to us:

		<i>Rogers</i>	<i>Weidner</i>
Tiglath-pileser IV. ³		745-727	746-728
Shalmaneser V		727-722	727-723
Sargon II		722-705	722-706
Sennacherib		705-680	705-682
Esarhaddon		680-668	681-669
Ashurbanapal		668-626	668-627

To these we may add the kings of the Neo-Babylonian Empire:

Nabu-pal-usur	(Nabopolassar)		625-604	625-605
Nabu-kudurri-usur	(Nebuchadrezzar)		604-561	604-562
Amel-Marduk	(Evil Merodach)		561-559	561-560
Nergal-shar-usur	(Neriglissar)		559-555	559-556
Labashi-Marduk	(Labassoarchos)		555	556
Nabu-na'id	(Nabonidus)		555-538	555-538

To ascertain Hebrew chronology it is best to begin with the fall of Jerusalem.

¹ Rogers, *History*, 6th ed., i. p. 503.

² *Op. cit.*, i. p. 538.

³ III according to Weidner and others.

There is an apparent discrepancy as to the date of this. In 2 Kings xxiv. 12, Nebuchadrezzar takes Jehoiachin in the eighth year of his reign = 597 B.C. but in the seventh (598 B.C.) according to Jeremiah lii. 28. In 2 Kings xxv. 8 the destruction of the Temple and deportation by Nebuzaradan fall in the nineteenth (586 B.C.) but in Jeremiah lii. 29 in the eighteenth year of the reign (587 B.C.). Similarly 2 Kings xxv. 27 makes the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity overlap the first year of Evil Merodach 561 B.C., which points to the earlier of the two dates as the more probable.

Fortunately we have materials which suggest the solution of the problem. In Jeremiah xlvi. 2 we read of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon at the time of the battle of Carchemish. Josephus has, however, preserved to us a story of Berossus according to which Nebuchadrezzar's father had entrusted his son with the command of the active army owing to the fact that he himself was no longer able to undergo the hardships of war (*Ant.*, X., xi. § 1, 220 ff.) and he was not actually king at the time of the battle. Apparently, however, the Jews sometimes reckoned the period during which he was practically regent and commander in chief as belonging to his reign. Hence they sometimes date events from his accession to power and sometimes from the commencement of his reign. Accordingly it would appear that 587 B.C. is the better date for the fall of Jerusalem.

Working backwards from this we get the following dates :¹

Reference.

Tiglath-pileser's annals 150 ; 2 Kings xv. 19	} Menahem pays tribute to Tiglath-pileser ² .	738
Inscriptions and 2 Kings xvi. 9		
	} Fall of Damascus	733
Inscriptions and 2 Kings xv. 29f.		
	} Deposition of Pekah ; accession of Hoshea ; annexation by Assyria of Naphtali, etc., and first deportation	732
Nimrod Tablet Reverse, line 11 with front lines		
2 Kings xviii. 2	} Ahaz pays tribute not later than the 17th year of Tiglath-pileser	728
	Accession of Hezekiah (29)	727

¹ The figures in brackets after a king's name give the length of his reign.

² He was crowned king at Babylon under the name of Pulu. Hence the Pul of 2 Kings xv. 19.

2 Kings xviii. 9	Siege of Samaria, 4th year of Hezekiah	. 723
2 Kings xviii. 10 Sargon's annals and other in- scriptions	} Fall of Samaria, 6th of Hezekiah	. 721
2 Kings xviii. 13 xx. 12		
	Fourteenth year of Hezekiah } Merodachbaladan's embassy }	. 713
Taylor Prism, etc.	Sennacherib's expedition	. 701
2 Kings xx 21, xxi. 1	} Death of Hezekiah, Accession of Manasseh (55)	. 698
2 Kings xxi. 18, 19		
xxi. 26, xxii. 1	Accession of Josiah (31)	. 641
3	18th year of Josiah	. 623
xxiii. 31	Jehoahaz ($\frac{1}{4}$)	. 610-09
2 Kings xxiii. 36	Jehoiakim (11)	. 609-598
xxiv. 8, 12	Jehoiachin ($\frac{1}{4}$) 8th year of Nebuchadrezzar	598
18	Zedekiah (11)	. 598-7
xxv. 2ff.	Fall of Jerusalem	. 587

In this period we have the following synchronisms. According to Jeremiah xxxii. 1 a date in the tenth year of Zedekiah was in the eighteenth of Nebuchadrezzar, i.e. 588-7. In xxv 1. (Heb) the fourth of Jehoiakim is given as the first of Nebuchadrezzar (605 or 604 according as the reckoning is from the regency or the actual accession), and in 3 we are told that twenty-three years had elapsed since the thirteenth year of Josiah. As a round number this is correct, for according to the list eighteen or nineteen years of Josiah, the three months of Jehoahaz and less than four years of Jehoiakim had elapsed. Earlier we have the following synchronisms. Isaiah xiv. 28 ff. is dated in the year that King Ahaz died. It warns the Philistines not to rejoice at the breaking of the rod that smote them, i.e. Tiglath-Pileser who died in 627 B.C.¹ Thus Ahaz must have passed away within a few months of his Assyrian suzerain and on this ground, which is entirely independent of the reckoning from the fall of Jerusalem, 727 B.C. becomes the probable date of Hezekiah's accession. If so, the beginning of the siege of Samaria and its fall would be in the fourth and sixth years of his reign respectively as given in 2 Kings. At first sight, however, there appears to be one glaring discrepancy. The fourteenth year of Hezekiah will be *circa* 713, but the expedition of Sennacherib (2 Kings

¹ See pp. 29 ff.

xviii. 13 ff.) does not fall in 713 but in 701, twelve years later. It is however remarkable that in 713 there was an earlier Assyrian expedition on which according to the monuments Judah was punished. It was the year in which Sargon's Tartan or commander-in-chief came to Ashdod.¹ In Sargon's inscriptions this is variously dated 713 or 711, but Olmstead has shown that the inscription which gives the former date is the more reliable² and we shall shortly find this corroborated by the Egyptian chronology. "It was still early in the year 713."³ This tallies with the view that Hezekiah came to the throne in 727. In the light of this it seems clear that the date 14 Hezekiah in 2 Kings xviii. 13 was originally followed by a narrative of the events of the year 713 and it is to that year that the accounts of Hezekiah's illness ("in those days" xx. 1) and Merodach-baladan's embassy ("at that time" xx. 12), fifteen years before the king's death, relate. Then somebody who did not realise that there had been two submissions to Assyria in Hezekiah's reign (that in the year 713 when the Tartan came to Ashdod and subsequently the payment of tribute to Sennacherib in 701) thought that the punishment of Judah in 713 was a mere duplicate of the account of the later happenings (xviii. 13b-xix.) and substituted this passage for the relation of the transactions with Assyria in 713. With the recognition of this single change the whole Judæan chronology of Kings from the accession of Hezekiah onwards becomes correct and intelligible; and this is natural, for the author would be best informed as to the chronology of his own country in the period nearest to his own age. We therefore accept the foregoing table as correct within a few months and lay stress on the fact that it is supported by synchronisms which are independent of one another.

The designation of Tirhakah as king of Cush (Ethiopia) in 2 Kings xix. 9 is in accordance with the Hebrew idiom. He was not yet king, just as Nebuchadrezzar had not yet ascended the throne when the battle of Carchemish was fought (Jer. xlvi. 2).⁴ Here the explanation given by Prof. Breasted from the Egyptological point of view may be quoted:

Taharka (Heb. Tirhakah) "narrates how he came north from Nubia as a youth of twenty years with some king. This would have been on the invasion of lower Egypt by Shabaka. Many years then elapsed before he became king, during which he did not see his mother, and must therefore have

¹ See pp. 37 f.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 78.

² *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon.*

⁴ See above, p. 156.

spent these years in the north. As a son of Piankhi, he must have occupied a prominent position. When it is recollected that the Hebrew records (2 Kings xix. 9) state that the enemy of Sennacherib at Altaqû in 701 B.C. (some thirteen years before Taharka's accession) was Taharka, the conclusion cannot be resisted that Shabaka sent Taharka in command of the Egyptian and Ethiopian forces, against the Assyrians."¹ The dates for the Egyptian kings of the period may conveniently be added here :

	<i>Breasted</i>	<i>Petrie</i> ²
Shabaka	712-700 B.C.	715-707
Shabataka	700-688 B.C.	707-693
Taharka	688-663 B.C.	693-667

When these dates are set beside Sargon's inscriptions the comparison enables us to give the preference to the earlier date for the Ashdod expedition and the later date for Shabaka's conquest. As we have seen ³ the B prism refers contemptuously to Pir'u (Pharaoh), king of Egypt. In the general Inscription (109) we read of "the king of Melucha", Ethiopia. Previously (102 f.) Sargon had spoken of "the borders of Egypt, which lies before Melucha." Obviously the king of Ethiopia and the king of Egypt are quite distinct persons. It follows that at the date of the Ashdod campaign Shabaka the Ethiopian king had not yet become king of Egypt. This supports the view that the campaign was in 713 B.C., not 711; it clearly proves that Shabaka did not obtain the Egyptian throne as early as 715 B.C. On the other hand it does not necessarily follow that all the other items of the chronology are correct. There is an Egyptian inscription which shows that Shabaka's *third* year was near 700 B.C. and it is therefore unlikely that this was his *first* year. Petrie only gives Shabaka eight years as against the twelve allowed by Breasted. However this and the further details of the chronology of these reigns do not affect our study.

We must now go back a little. Shabaka probably burnt Bocchoris alive, so that the date of his accession is the end of the latter's reign of six years. This gives us the name of the Pharaoh who could not help Sargon's enemies and the reason for his powerlessness.⁴ The Ethiopians were advancing on him from the south and the days of his reign were already numbered.

¹ J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, iv. 455.

² W. M. Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, III [1905], pp. 267 ff.

³ See p. 37.

⁴ Compare p. 38.

Earlier we meet with Seve or So in 2 Kings xvii. 4. He is described as king of Egypt, but is obviously identical with the Sibe of Sargon's inscriptions who was defeated in 720 and was then Tartan (commander-in-chief) of Egypt. The same inscription speaks of a Pharaoh of Egypt as sending tribute. The explanation of these facts is very simple. Egypt had fallen into a number of petty principalities when Piankhi the Ethiopian who reigned at Napata established his overlordship. This is dated shortly before 720 by Breasted but in 728 or 727 by H. R. Hall.¹ We know from Piankhi's stele that when his work was done he returned to the south. It also seems clear that he left Osorkon III in possession of his throne. Shabaka was either his son² or his younger brother and son-in-law.³ "He would naturally be left in command in lower Egypt by his father Piankhi after his return to Napata."⁴ As we have already seen in the case of Nebuchadrezzar the Hebrew records apply the royal title to viceroys. It would therefore be natural that Shabaka should in such circumstances be called king of Egypt in Kings.⁵ He is not called Pharaoh, a title that would presumably not be given to a viceroy. But it is necessary to make one point that has apparently been overlooked. Piankhi had been lord of lower Egypt. How then did it come about that the Ethiopian monarchs ceased to hold this position till the recovery of the country by Shabaka in 712 B.C.? The answer is surely to be found in the defeat of the viceroy Sibe by the Assyrians in 720 B.C. The petty kings of lower Egypt then reasserted their authority and one of them—probably Osorkon III—who had been left in possession of his throne doubtless hastened to send tribute to the Assyrian monarch. This entirely fits in with Breasted's view⁶ that "Osorkon III of Bubastis finally recovered Thebes, perhaps about 720 B.C."

When we read Sargon's claim to have received tribute from Pharaoh king of Egypt in 715 we understand Bocchoris to be meant.⁷

Two alternative schemes require consideration. One rests on the hypothesis that in the figures for the Jewish kings a

¹ *Ancient History of the near East*, 5th Edition, 468, 471.

² Hall, *op. cit.* p. 47.

³ Breasted, *History*, 2nd Ed., p. 550.

⁴ Hall, p. 472. Thus the Tartan is Piankhi's commander and the Pharaoh is Osorkon and no theory of a desert Musri is necessary.

⁵ The philological evidence for and against the identification of Shabaka with Sibe is stated by Olmstead, *Western Asia*, p. 55 note.

⁶ *Ancient Records*, iv. p. 415.

⁷ *Sargon Annals*, 97.

year in which a monarch died was reckoned twice over, being counted as part of his reign and also as part of his successor's. This gives 720 as the year of Hezekiah's accession, and it has the advantage of allowing Ahaz a sole reign that on this system might be reckoned as the sixteen years of 2 Kings xvi. 2. The following considerations however dispose of this theory. 1. Isaiah xiv. 28-32 requires that the death of Ahaz should synchronise with that of Tiglath-pileser ¹ in 727 B.C. Nothing happened in 720 that could fit this passage. 2. The author of Kings may at least be expected to have known in what Jewish reign so important an event as the extinction of the Northern Kingdom occurred. He is emphatic in assigning it to the reign of Hezekiah. 3. The fourteenth year of Hezekiah would then be 707 B.C., which is not the date of any castigation of Judah, nor was Merodach-baladan at that time on the throne of Babylonia.

Another scheme assumes that the expedition of Sennacherib in 701 B.C. fell in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah and accordingly places the accession of this monarch in 715 B.C. This suffers from the first two objections raised above. In addition, it makes the whole of the later chronology impossible, for Hezekiah must have survived his fourteenth year by fifteen years,² which brings us to 686 B.C. This will not allow the necessary time for the subsequent reigns.

So far as Judah is concerned we seem to have reached firm ground for the chronology from 727-587 B.C., a period of 140 years. We must now consider the dates for the concluding years of the Northern Kingdom. According to the Hebrew narrative Samaria fell in Hoshea's ninth year, but we have already seen that the monuments give 732 as the date of his accession and 721 for the fall of Samaria. It appears then that the figure for his reign was correct to the beginning of the siege of Samaria in 723. The chronologer here made the error of assuming that the nine years ran to the fall of the capital. He gives Pekah twenty years and Pekahiah two, but as the monuments attest the payment of tribute by Menahem in 738 this cannot stand. There is however no reason to doubt Pekahiah's two years (subject to the method of reckoning in vogue in Israel). The whole of the error may be in Pekah's twenty. When we remember that this number was sometimes used for a short unknown period, it seems easiest to assume that the length of the reign was unknown to the chronologer.

For the preceding period we must go back to another monu-

¹ See pp. 29 ff.

² See 2 Kings xx. 6.

mental reference, viz. Jehu's tribute in 842. Shalmaneser III records in an annalistic fragment that in the eighteenth of his years of reign, i.e. in 842 B.C., he "received the tribute of the Tyrians, Sidonians, and of Jehu, of the land of Omri" and an inscription on an obelisk gives details of its nature.¹ There is general agreement that this must have taken place at the beginning of Jehu's reign and it is therefore thought with great probability that his accession took place *circa* 843 B.C. It is then found that subject to the observance of one principle the figures given for the kings of Israel work out exactly from Menahem to Jehu. That principle is that a portion of a year was counted as a regnal year. Hence when a king died in the middle of the year, that year would be counted twice over, once in the number for his reign and once in that of his successor. This does not hold of Judah, where we have found that the figures of the last 140 years are correct when taken as dead reckoning, any necessary adjustments having been made before they were embodied in the chronology. One correction of the books of Kings appears to be necessary, but it has little effect on the chronology. According to 2 Kings xiv. 29, xv. 8 Zechariah reigned for six months in succession to Jeroboam II. But a contemporary prophet writing before Pekah's accession says of this period, "I cut off three shepherds in one month" (Zech. xi. 8). It is probable therefore that Zechariah was really associated with his father for the last six months of his reign. We thus get the following table :

Reference	King	No. of years including fractions.	Date of accession.
2 Kings x. 36	Jehu	28	843
xiii. 1	Jehoahaz	17	816
10	Jehoash	16	800
xiv. 23	Jeroboam II	41	785
xv. 8	Zechariah	6 months	745
13	Shallum	1 month	745
17	Menahem	10	745
23	Pekahiah	2	736
27	Pekah		735
xvii. 1	Hoshea	9	732

In this period there are two other synchronisms to be noted. According to 2 Kings xiii. 4 f. "Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him : for he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Syria oppressed them. And the Lord gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under

¹ Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 304.

the hand of the Syrians : and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime." Some commentators have sought to refer this to Jeroboam II on the strength of xiv. 27. That overlooks the fact that this king did not ascend the throne until sixteen years after the death of Jehoahaz, to whom God is said to have hearkened in the matter. Moreover, while we find Jehoahaz so weakened as to have an army of only fifty cavalry, ten chariots and 10,000 infantry (2 Kings xiii. 7), his immediate successor Jehoash recovered territory from Benhadad and defeated him three times (25). It is therefore evident that those are correct who see a reference to the Assyrian defeat of Syria. Adad-nirari IV (812-783 B.C.) tells us that "Tyre, Sidon, the land of Omri (Israel), Edom, Palastu (Philistia), to the coast of the great sea of the west had cast themselves at my feet, I laid tribute and taxes upon them. I marched against Damascus, I shut up Mari', the king of Damascus, in Damascus, his royal city." Damascus surrendered.¹ Adad-nirari made three expeditions to the west, in 806, 803 and 797 B.C.² The expedition of 797 was against the city of Mansuate, not against Damascus, so that we are limited to the two former dates, both of which fall in the reign of Jehoahaz. Presumably the fall of Damascus and the complete success of the Assyrians belong to the later date though it was not till the reign of Joash that Israel had recovered sufficiently to commence the reconquest of its lost territory.

There is one other synchronism, that of Amos, on which see above pp. 22 f.

At this point it may be well to consider the relative dates of the fall of Damascus and the annexation of Northern Israel by Tiglath-pileser. Some writers apparently regard the latter event as the earlier of the two. The basis of this theory appears to be the fact that in the narrative of 2 Kings, xv. 29 f. deals with Israel and xvi. 9 with Damascus. There is, however, no indication as to which event is the earlier. The following considerations suggest that Tiglath-pileser dealt first with Rezin and then with Pekah. The Assyrian record narrates the treatment of Damascus first. Geographically and strategically the probability is that a conqueror coming from Assyria would begin by attacking the nearer country, and not leave an undefeated enemy on his lines of communication. Chronologically the nine years of Hoshca's reign fit 732 rather than 733.³

¹ Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, 305 f.

² Rogers, *Hist.* ii. 255.

³ See p. 161

When we come to the corresponding reigns in Judah we find great difficulties. Athaliah came to the throne at the same time as Jehu, i.e. in 843 B.C., but the sum of the reigns from her accession to that of Hezekiah is 159 years, which correspond to 116 in reality. The text of Kings, however, gives us several hints. Amaziah was captured by Jehoash (800-785 B.C.) and it was probably at that time that Uzziah was made king by the people at the age of sixteen (2 Kings xiv. 21). This appears to be confirmed by the curious expression in verse 22 where we read, "He built Elath, and restored it to Judah, *after that the king slept with his fathers.*" This looks as if part of his reign had fallen in a period *before* the king slept with his fathers. In the last part of his reign he was leprous and Jotham was regent (xv. 5). Doubtless this has been reckoned in both reigns. The real trouble comes with Ahaz. As we have seen, he died in 727 B.C., but according to 2 Kings xv. 37, Jotham was still on the throne when the Syro-Ephraimitish war began, i.e. *circa* 735 B.C. Yet 2 Kings xvi. 2 gives Ahaz sixteen years. Either therefore he was associated with Jotham for some time, though there is not the slightest hint of this in the text, or else the figure sixteen is wrong. That the data here are unreliable is proved by a comparison of xvi. 2 with xviii. 1 f. for if Ahaz was only thirty-six at the time of his death he cannot have had a son of twenty-five. It is possible that Ahaz, whose mother's name is not given, was really brother, not son, of Jotham, and that this has led to some confusion. In these circumstances any chronology of Judah is little more than guess-work, but with this reserve the following approximate scheme may be suggested :

Reference.	Monarch.	No. of years (dead reckoning.)	Date.
2 Kings xi. 3 f.	Athaliah . . .	6	843-837
xii. 2.	Joash . . .	40	837-797 or 799
xiv. 2.	Amaziah . . .	29	797-768 or 799-770
xv. 2.	Uzziah . . .	52	788-736 or 790-738
33	Jotham . . .	16	751-735
xvi. 2.	Ahaz . . .	16 (error)	735-727

If reliance can be placed on Amaziah's age at accession, which is given in xiv. 2 as twenty-five, he will have been eighteen at Uzziah's birth if the latter ascended the throne in 788 at the age of sixteen.

We have one other synchronism of importance in this period. According to 2 Kings xii. 18 compared with 7, Hazael's invasion of Judah occurred somewhere about the

twenty-third year of Joash, i.e. *circa* 814 B.C. This suits xiii. 22, according to which Hazael oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz (816-800 B.C.). It is, however, probable that, except in the case of Athaliah, who had entered on the seventh year of her reign (xi. 4), the figures overlap, as in the case of the later kings of Israel. If so, Amaziah's reign was from 798-770, and Uzziah's may have terminated in 739, while Jotham's regency would begin *circa* 750.

There is one other possibility of error in this list. The number forty assigned to Joash (2 Kings xii. 2) is always suspicious because it was habitually used non-arithmetically as a synonym for some such word as many,¹ and according to 2 Kings xiv. 7 Amaziah survived Jehoash of Israel fifteen years, i.e. he died in 770, not in 768. This would involve shortening the reign of Joash by two years and would throw back the dates of Amaziah and Uzziah by that period.

On the whole we may regard the foregoing table as probably accurate to within three or four years and take it as a sufficient guide for the chronology of the earlier prophetic period.

The words "in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah" in 2 Kings xv. 30 are inconsistent with 32 f. and xvii. 1. They are lacking in some Greek MSS. and should probably be omitted as a late and erroneous note.

¹ See p. 79.

APPENDIX II

Assyria in the Prophets

THE word אשור Ashur, Assyria occurs eighteen times in Isaiah xxxvi.-xxxix. (xxxvi. 1, 2, 4, 8, 15, 16, 18; xxxvii. 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 18, 21, 33, 36, 37; xxxviii. 6). In all these cases it means beyond all doubt or question the historical Assyria.

But it is said that in fourteen passages of the prophets it denotes not the well-known country or kingdom of that name but sometimes Persia or Babylonia or the Seleucid kingdom of Syria.¹ It is conceded that in all the other occurrences in the prophets Assyria itself and no other country or district is meant.

In the rest of the prophetic literature Assyria admittedly has the same meaning thirty-two or (if we include two passages where the text is doubtful thirty-four) times, viz.: Isaiah vii. 17, 18, 20, viii. 4, 7, x. 5, xx. 1, 4, 6, xxiii. 13, lii. 4, Jeremiah ii. 18, 36, l. 17, 18, Ezekiel xvi. 28, xxiii. 5, 7, 9, 12, 23, xxvii. 6 (text doubtful), 23, xxxi. 3 (text doubtful), xxxii. 22, Hosea v. 13, vii. 11, viii. 9, ix. 3, x. 6, xi. 5, xii. 2, Nahum iii. 18, Zephaniah ii. 13. Again in Psalm lxxxiii. 9 (8) the word unquestionably denotes the historical Assyria, and in Lamentations v. 6 it can have no other meaning. The reference is to the relations between Judah on the one hand and Egypt and Assyria on the other in the period which ended with the fall of Jerusalem.

It is to be observed that the theory that in the fourteen passages in question Assyria has some other meaning suffers from certain initial improbabilities. 1. It is extraordinarily unlikely that in two verses that occur on the same page—sometimes in immediate juxtaposition—the name denotes two entirely different countries. For instance it is difficult to

¹ See G. Hölscher, *Die Propheten* [1914], p. 454.

believe that though in Hosea xi. 5 and xii. 2 it signifies one country it has a totally different sense in xi. 11, or that it denotes a different region in Isaiah xix. 23-5 while clearly applying to the historical Assyria and no other land in the verse that immediately follows. 2. It is obvious that the critical position suffers greatly from the necessity of suggesting that the word denotes not one other empire but two or three. Had it been said that up to some particular date Assyria meant the country of that name and in subsequent ages some other specified country, the theory would have possessed more plausibility. But this will not suit the critics, for the references in the fourteen passages cannot be made to tally with any one country other than the historical Assyria. Therefore the choice lies between admitting that these passages are pre-exilic and giving the word a Protean character so that while in Isaiah x. 5 it admittedly means Assyria in 12 "it is the note of a late editor or scribe" containing "a summary statement of" the "idea that a great judgment on the nations would take place in or about Jerusalem" "applied to the specific case of Assyria" (Gray), and in 24 it has to mean the "Seleucid empire" (Duhm).

Before considering whether there is any evidence that Assyria ever denoted Babylon or Persia or Seleucid Syria, it will be well to clear the ground by dealing with a statement about Babylonia which is made to support the case. H. G. Mitchell¹ alleges that "In the books of Ezra and Nehemiah Babylonia (Ezra v. 13, Neh. xiii. 6) is used for Persia." Ezra v. 13 runs as follows: "But in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree to build this house of God." In Nehemiah xiii. 6 the expression is "in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon." These passages are illuminated by the titular in the inscription of Cyrus, "I am Cyrus, king of the world, the great king, the powerful king, *king of Babylon*, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters of the world."² That proves beyond dispute that "king of Babylon" was one of the titles borne by the great king. In the Ezra passage this is particularly clear, for "the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon" means the first year of his reign over Babylonia—not the first year of his reign over Anshan. It negatives the idea that the dominions over which Cyrus ruled before the capture of Babylon could be included in the expression Babylon. George V is Emperor of India, but an allusion to him in that capacity

¹ *Zechariah* [1912], p. 293.

² Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 382.

would certainly not prove that England or Canada could be called India.

Coming now to the word Assyria we find that Mitchell¹ alleges of the name Assyria that "in 2 Kings xxiii. 29 it must be interpreted as denoting Babylonia; for the Assyrian Empire was overthrown before Necho II started on his ill-fated expedition." The date of Josiah's death is 609 or 610 B.C. Nineveh did not fall till 607 or 606 B.C. The suggestion that the Assyrian Empire was overthrown before Necho II started is therefore baseless. There is no evidence at all that Assyria was ever used for Babylonia and the idea is extremely improbable.

Not less amazing is the attempt to prove that Ashur can mean Syria. "But the name Assyria is used by later writers, as the name of Israel's first great foreign oppressor, to designate typically later peoples, e.g. Babylon (Lam. v. 6), Persia (Ezra vi. 22), Syria (Zech. x. 11, Isa. xxvii. 13 (?), Psal. lxxxiii. 9 (?)). The name Assyria clung to the territory long after the fall of Nineveh; cf the Talmud's name for the Aramaic script employed throughout the regions formally controlled by Assyria viz. **כתב אשורי**; and Herodotus vii. 63, where the names Assyria and Syria are declared to be synonymous."²

What Herodotus says in this passage is the exact opposite of what the critics suppose. "These were called Syrians by the Greeks, but by the barbarians they were called Assyrians." "Barbarians" in the mouth of a Greek means non-Greeks. According therefore to the testimony of Herodotus that the critics invoke, a Jew or other Asiatic would not apply the term Syrian to an Assyrian. That he could apply the term Assyria to Syria, which is what the critics wish to prove, is not even suggested. Nor could he. The term for Syria(n) is Aram(aean) and this is so throughout Old Testament times, even in Ezra iv. 7; Daniel ii. 4. The latter passage is of exceptional importance in this connection, for the critics assign it to 168 or 167 B.C.

It is no better with the other contention. It is perfectly true that the Talmud uses the expression "Assyrian script," but it does *not* use Assyria or Assyrian to denote Syria or Syrian. On the contrary here too Aram(aean) is used as in the Bible. Ashur therefore does *not* mean Syria.

It is said that in Ezra vi. 22 Assyria refers "to the Persian Empire as the contemporary occupant of the Tigris-Euphrates valley which formerly belonged to Assyria,"³ but we have

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 293.

² J. M. P. Smith, *Micah* [1912], p. 107.

³ Gray, *Isaiah* I., 226.

already seen that in this passage the king of Assyria refers to a viceroy.¹

Before embarking on a consideration of the usage of the word Assyria in the passages of the prophets that are challenged by the critics it is necessary to say something of the diaspora in early times. Here is the critical case. "It is of course impossible to disprove that in Isaiah's time scattered Israelites were to be found in all the countries mentioned at the end of [Isa. xi.] 11. Some might have been included among the captives whom Sargon settled in Elam, Babylonia and Hamath; fugitives from the northern kingdom might have taken refuge in considerable numbers in Egypt at the fall of Samaria; and the slave trade might have carried small groups of Hebrews to the remote regions. But the language here seems to imply a Jewish dispersion on a large scale."² On the contrary it can be proved that in the days of Hosea and Isaiah there was already a widespread diaspora. In 1 Kings xx. 34 Benhadad makes an offer to Ahab containing the following words: "and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." That proves a considerable Israelite trading settlement in Damascus. In 2 Kings v. 2, we read of a little Israelite maid who had been captured in war and served Naaman's wife. In verse 17 Naaman asks for two mules' burden of earth, "for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord." This idea of erecting an altar in Damascus which would possess religious extraterritoriality on account of the Israelite earth is not put forward as some new invention of Naaman's. On the contrary the implication is that it was a well-known device for enabling the sacrificial worship of the God of Israel to be conducted in foreign lands. When it was first adopted we do not know. We can only infer that it was probably later in date than the days when men could say to David, "Go, serve other gods" (1 Sam. xxvi. 19); but by the time of Elisha it was obviously well established. So far all our information relates to Syria, but that appears to be merely due to the accident that a large portion of the books of Kings is concerned with the relations between Syria and Israel. At a much earlier date we read of Hiram that "He was the son of a widow woman of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre" (1 Kings vii. 14). In that case there had been intermarriage, but it proves the presence of Israelites in Tyre, and it is only reasonable to suppose that sooner or later they had recourse to the same

¹ See p. 99.

² Skinner, *Isaiah I-XXXIX*. [1915], p. 108.

device as Naaman. Invasions such as that of Shishak and the ordinary exigences of commerce would naturally lead to the formation of Israelite communities in the chief neighbouring countries, "Oil is carried into Egypt," Hosea xii. 2 (1), cp. Isaiah ii. 6 ff. In addition we know from all historical experience that at the approach of a cruel invader large sections of the population of the invaded country flee from their homes. We should therefore be certain, even if we had no specific information on the subject, that the frequent wars in which Israel was involved in an age when military operations were none too kindly would have led to an extensive emigration. This is confirmed by other passages from the prophets in addition to those that we have to consider. Hosea writes "Ephraim shall return to Egypt" (ix. 3) and again "For, lo, they are gone away from destruction, yet Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them" (6). The first Assyrian deportation occurred in 732 B.C. and at least from that date there was a strong representation of Israel in Assyria.

Other facts bearing on the subject are the advice given by Elisha in 2 Kings viii. 1, the various flights of David and Absalom and the evidence of widespread commercial relations in the near East offered alike by the references in Genesis and the wanderings of the patriarchs and the archaeological records. It is therefore certain that Skinner's contentions are utterly unsound. With this introduction we may return to the usage of Assyria.

The onus of proof lies on those who say that the word means some country other than the historical empire of that name. As we have seen, they have entirely failed to discharge it and it would be sufficient to let the matter rest there. Nevertheless, on looking at the passages where it is sought to give some other meaning to the word I have found that a large number of them contain some other positive evidence of date and accordingly it will be best to consider them in detail in view of the wide diffusion of the unsound critical theories.

The first two passages are Hosea xi. 11 and xiv. 4. In neither of these is it suggested that any country other than Assyria is meant. Hölscher¹ challenges the first on the ground of its knowing a diaspora. We have seen what that theory is worth. He attacks the latter passage for reasons which refute themselves. Hosea does not elsewhere object to horses! The formation of this idea presupposes a knowledge of Isaiah (cp. Isa. xxx. 16, xxxi. 1)! He only mentions

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 429 n.

Assyria instead of Egypt as elsewhere ! Such contentions cannot be regarded as worthy of discussion. Again in Isaiah x. 12 it is not even seriously contended that Assyria means any other country. Nor is there the slightest ground for questioning that the verse is by Isaiah. Gray (*ad loc.*) is unable to produce any evidence of spuriousness. The next passage is x. 24. Gray¹ denies 20-27 to Isaiah. His own statement of his reason is as follows : " Isaiah wrote prose as well as poetry, but there is no reason to believe that he allowed fine poems to dribble out in prose conclusions." The answer is obvious enough. The value of the modern metrical theories is seen when the conclusive test of archæology is applied.² How Isaiah alternated between poetry and prose is to be determined, if at all, from a consideration of all the facts supplied by his extant work, and not by the dictum of some modern commentator. The passage obviously refers to the historical situation which existed before the events of 701 B.C. and to no other,³ and there is no room for legitimate doubt as to the meaning. Isaiah xiv. 25 is another passage which clearly and indubitably refers to Assyria and no other country, nor can Gray (*ad loc.*) produce anything to displace the natural impression that it makes. The circumstances postulated in the passage are those of Isaiah's time, not of any other age. Precisely the same remark applies to Isaiah xxx. 31 and xxxi. 8. All three passages refer to the disaster that overfell Sennacherib's host and to nothing else.⁴ Here as so often we have to deal with the products of undisciplined fancies unsupported by any particle of scholarship or logic.

In Isaiah xi. 11 we read " to recover the remnant of his people, which shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt (Mizraim), and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea." The Greek has Assyria, Egypt, Babylonia (Shinar), Ethiopia (Cush), Elam, the rising of the sun and Arabia. It is of course perfectly possible in the abstract that amplification has occurred in one or both texts. Our business must therefore be primarily with the common element : Assyria, Egypt, Babylonia, Ethiopia and Elam. Neither list has Aram (Syria). Babylonia is apparently separate from Assyria, Elam from both, and Ethiopia from Egypt. What period will suit these data ? Certainly not the Persian age, when Assyria, Babylonia and Elam (and Egypt from 525-405 B.C.) were merged in the dominions of the great king. Mero-

¹ P. 203.

³ See pp. 40-52.

² See p. 177.

⁴ See above pp. 52 f.

dach-Baladan was king of an independent Babylonia from 721-710 B.C. and again for a short time later. Egypt, Ethiopia and Elam were all separate from the Assyrian Empire in Isaiah's age, though sometimes some of these powers were more or less vassals. From 734 B.C. Damascus belonged to Assyria, which accounts for the omission of Aram. This passage therefore satisfies the conditions of the age. Further, if the Hebrew text be adopted we have a close parallel cited by W. Max Müller for the collocation of Egypt, Pathros and Cush. "He would give to Egypt here the limited sense of lower Egypt; then the three terms together cover the Nile Valley. So Esar-haddon describes himself as king of the kings of Musur, Paturisi, and Ku-si."¹ Lastly Hamath is conspicuous in the same period. It "had never been destroyed or even engrafted into the Assyrian Empire"² till 720 B.C., when Sargon "killed the rebels in those cities, and established peace. Two hundred chariots and six hundred horsemen I collected among the inhabitants of Hamath and added to my royal forces."³

Its separate mention therefore tells the same tale. It thus appears that the political geography is that of Isaiah's age and will in no wise fit the Persian hypothesis.⁴

The meaning of Assyria in xi. 11 governs its interpretation in verse 16. It is to be noted that Gray⁵ writes of xi. 9-16: "It is very doubtful whether any part of this section is the work of Isaiah: most of it is clearly post-exilic, since it presupposes the Exile and the Dispersion of the Jews as existing facts." That Isaiah should speak of "an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall remain from Assyria" is natural enough, but is obviously impossible for a post-exilic document. We have already seen that the dispersion fits the facts of Isaiah's day. For the rest it is sufficient to refer to what has been said on this passage.⁶

Isaiah xix. 23-25 forms part of the larger section 18-25.⁷ The language here used is technical. Israel had become God's people in virtue of covenants concluded in two different forms. One was that with Abraham and an essential part of the transaction was the *token* (a technical term of this kind of covenant). Another was that with the twelve tribes at Sinai. Here we find a vow (Exod. xxiv. 4 ff.), an altar, twelve pillars,

¹ Gray, *op. cit.* p. 226.

² Rogers, *History* II. p. 318.

³ Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels*, p. 332.

⁴ The complete correspondence of the Hebrew text with the facts of the time makes it preferable to the Greek readings.

⁵ *Op. cit.* p. 223.

⁶ See pp. 101 f.

⁷ See pp. 75 f.

sacrifices and burnt offerings. The number of pillars is here exceptional and determined by the number of tribes. Normally one pillar was sufficient, and as we know from other passages this was technically a *witness*. Hence when we read Isaiah xix. 19 ff. we see that their true meaning is that Egypt is put on a level with Israel as God's people and that this idea is expressed in the technical language of the transactions by which the special relationship of Israel to God had been created. It is to be noticed that this is proof of early date, for in post-exilic times the original meaning of the sacrificial law was not understood.¹ The exile had put an end once and for all to the lay sacrifices with an altar of earth and stones in which the witness covenants had originated, and no post-exilic author knew enough of early sacrificial law to be able to compose such a section. Had he possessed the necessary knowledge he certainly would not have used it, for what worse way could there be of recommending new thought to his public than by combining it with obsolete law that was hostile to the claim of Jerusalem to be the exclusive sacrificial centre? And a similar remark applies to the name Assyria. Would any writer of to-day desirous of introducing a novel universalism refer to Italy as Piedmont? It must be obvious that the only possible course for anybody with such a task would be to name the great powers of his day by expressions applicable to their total extent.

The sole remaining instance of the use of Assyria in Isaiah is xxvii. This passage is discussed below.²

Micah v. 4 f. (5 f.) has been considered above.³

The only other passage in Micah is vii. 12. Here we must begin by restoring the text. A Greek papyrus which is our earliest witness, supported by other Greek authorities, reads *Συρίας ἡμερὰ ὕδατος καὶ θορυβόν* for the last four words of the Hebrew. The two texts then run

נהר	יִם	מִים	וְהָר	הָהָר
נָהָר	אֲרָם	יִם	מִים	וּמְהוּמָה

Now the Massoretic text is unintelligible. By an abuse of language a poor sense is extracted. It therefore appears that the Greek is superior. We may then render "A day it is when unto thee shall they come from Ashur even unto (reading *וערי* for *וערי*) Egypt, and from Egypt even unto

¹ These matters are too technical to be discussed fully here and I must refer my readers to *Studies in Biblical Law*, chap. ii., and *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, chap. vi.

² See pp. 178 ff.

³ See pp. 45 f.

the river of Aram (Syria); a day of water (flood) and tumult." In verse 14 allusion is made to the deportation from Bashan and Gilead, but not from Samaria. The prophet foretells the restoration under Cyrus. The passage is thus entirely suitable for Micah looking forward to the restoration after the Babylonian captivity, but speaking from the circumstances of his own time. On the other hand nobody could have written thus after the fall of Jerusalem, because the first thought must have been for the restoration of the exiles in Babylonia.

There is thus not a particle of evidence to support the theory that Assyria ever means anything but the well-known country of that name. The contentions that have been put forward to prop up this view rest on misunderstandings. All the passages in which it occurs either require or permit its only known meaning: and in many of them it is supported as a sign of date by other considerations of the most diverse character. With the erroneous theories we have examined many of the critical contentions fall to the ground.

APPENDIX III

Representative Critics on Isaiah vii. 17 ff.

THE following extracts give representative critical views on Isaiah vii. 17 ff.

"For the prophet expects that Judea shall be the theatre of a conflict between Egypt and Assyria, and shall suffer terribly under it, so that agriculture will be stopped, and the rearing of cattle in the uncultivated fields alone be profitable. It shall be a time such as Judah had not experienced since the disruption of the kingdom after the death of Solomon. What was thus at first said regarding Immanuel alone is afterwards extended to the whole people.

"It cannot now be a matter of difficulty for us to form a well-founded judgment upon the fulfilment of these prophecies of Isaiah. One part of them has, another part has not, been realised. Damascus was taken and depopulated by Tiglath-pileser, the Syrian kingdom was incorporated with the Assyrian monarchy. Pekah also felt the rod of the Assyrian, and had to resign to him a portion of his territory. All this took place within the limit fixed by Isaiah. But, in contrast with this, we find not only that Damascus was not destroyed, but that the kingdom of Israel continued still to exist for about twenty years, and that the desolation of Judea by the Assyrian and Egyptian armies did not take place."¹

"His anticipations of evil show a clear appreciation of the dangers of the situation; but they are of the nature of a shrewd political forecast rather than of exceptional prediction, and as the future actually shaped itself his worst anticipations were not realised. The fall of Samaria did not come so soon as he expected (viii. 4), the conflict of Assyria and Egypt was deferred, and when it actually took place, thirty years later, the field of battle was in the extreme south of Palestine, and more in Philistine than in Judean territory. The land suffered grievously from the armies which the Assyrians

¹ Kuenen, *op. cit.* pp. 281 f.

directed against Egypt, but the distress never reached the pitch which Isaiah feared."¹

"Attempts have been made to discover a connection, either between verses 1-16 and 17-25 or, verse 17 being omitted as a gloss, between 1-16 and 18-25. If verse 17 (with its reference to Judah) be omitted, 18-25 can be treated (Hackmann, p. 66) as an amplification in detail of what is stated summarily, but sufficiently, in verse 16b, the ruin of Ephraim and Syria. But the theory of Duhm, Cheyne, Marti, that verse 17 is a gloss written to connect verses 1-16 and verses 18-25 founders on the fact that it is particularly between verse 16 and verse 17 that the lack of connection is most conspicuous; Greek feeling this supplied ἀλλὰ at the beginning of verse 17. To attribute verse 17 to a glossator who wished to create a connection between 1-16 and 18-25 is at the same time to accuse him of failing in his attempt. The entire tenor of 1-16 as interpreted above is that Judah has nothing to fear, is not to suffer ruin; the entire tenor of verses 17-25 is that a most complete ruin is impending over the country: of course either Isaiah himself or a glossator may very well have held that these two contrary fortunes were to be successive stages in the future, but verse 17 fails to mark a transition from one stage to another. . . .

"Some early annotations have crept into the text: such are the words 'the king of Assyria' (vers. 17 and 20) at least, as most scholars since Houbigant and Lowth have recognised, perhaps also (Duhm, Marti) 'at the end of the streams of Egypt' and 'which is in the land of Assyria' (ver. 18). Even what is left after the removal of these notes looks more like an editor's collection and restoration of fragments than a prophetic poem in its original form: note the recurrent 'And it shall come to pass in that day' (vers. 18, 20, 21, 23), the awkward fourfold occurrence of הָיָה in verse 23, and the apparent mixture of rhythmical and unrhythmical elements. To what part of Isaiah's lifetime the groundwork belonged, and what precisely are the limits of Isaiah's work, cannot be determined with certainty. . . . If his verses have reached us in their original form, he expected invasion from both Assyria and Egypt—a point of view which finds an incomplete parallel in Hosea ix. 3, and none at all in Isaiah. Elsewhere Isaiah feared alliance with (xxix.-xxx.), not invasion from, Egypt. Moreover, previous to Sabako's accession, circa 712 B.C., Egypt was too weak to cause much fear in her neighbours. If *which is in the end of the streams of Egypt* and *which is in the land of Assyria* are notes added to the text by an annotator who mistakenly inferred that two insects must imply two nations, Isaiah was predicting here, as elsewhere, an Assyrian invasion. The omission of the prosaic annotations leaves two almost perfect distichs 4: 4."²

It is of interest to notice how the critics first read into

¹ W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, 2nd Ed. [1895], p. 268.

² G. B. Gray, *Isaiah I*, 136 ff.

Isaiah a statement that the battle was to take place in Judean territory and then blame him for the nonfulfilment of their oracle. Isaiah's language (vii. 19) deals with the scenery of the field of battle, not its political allegiance. It is of not less interest to notice how the narrative of the Taylor prism with its minute confirmation of the oracle shatters alike the textual criticism and the metrical theories of the critics.

APPENDIX IV

Isaiah xxiv.-xxvii.

THESE chapters constitute one of the most difficult portions of the prophetic literature and call for separate treatment.

My study of them has convinced me that much of the difficulty is due to the state of the text, and that if only we had a true copy of the prophet's autograph it would appear that although his utterances were originally obscure and far from easy, they bore a very different meaning from what is generally supposed. Accordingly the first task must be to go as near as possible to recovering the true text of the crucial passages. As the main guide to the views of the critics I take the thorough discussion in Dr. G. B. Gray's *Isaiah* I. [1912] pp. 397-472. We have to deal with three classes of argument—historical allusions, the supposed history of ideas, and an argument from language and style. I begin with the first and quote the preliminary argument as an introduction.

"More than once in these chapters we seem to come on allusions to clearly defined and historical events or circumstances; but as Delitzsch well observes, 'like will-o-the-wisps, they elude any attempt at following out and grasping them.' The allusion to the city of Jerusalem in xxvi. 2 is, of course, unmistakable though it is not here, as it is in xxiv. 23, mentioned by name; but what are the "City of Chaos" (xxiv. 10), "the fortified city" (xxvii. 10), "the city set on high" (xxvi. 5, cp. xxv. 12)? Are they one and the same? if so, what city is meant? and if they are different, how many and what cities are intended? what people are described as the 'strong people' (xxv. 3)? It seems clear that the writers had a definite city, or definite cities, and a definite people in view, but unfortunately the descriptions are so vague that they are satisfied by any of the many cities with which at different times and by different writers they have been identified—Nineveh, Babylon, Shushan, Tyre, Samaria, and so forth."¹

¹ *Op. cit.* 398 f.

I agree with Gray in thinking that xxvi. 2 refers to Jerusalem. With regard to the other passages we must first examine the texts. We may commence with that which gives the key to the whole prophecy.

The difficulties of extracting any satisfactory meaning from Isaiah xxvii. 2-13 are phenomenal. I believe however that by careful work it is possible to make some progress in the effort to improve the present condition of the chapter. The first step must be to distinguish clearly between two different stages of the trouble. Much of it is due to the state of our archetype, that is to say of the last common ancestor of all our texts. Unless and until material is discovered that is independent of the archetype, all we can hope to do is to get as near as possible to restoring it and to make some reasonable conjectures as to how the difficulties arose. Further perplexity has however been caused by post-archetypal corruption, and here we can sometimes recover the true text with more or less probability through diligent study of our authorities. Some cautious steps in this direction have been taken by Gray, and it will be found that I have benefited by his labours while striking out a line of my own. The difficulties are so great that it is necessary to abandon the order of the text and jump from one part of the problem to another according as we are able to recover some fragment here and there of the author's meaning or some light on one or other of the causes of our perplexities.

There is a lacuna after the words "on that day" in verse 2. This is proved by two considerations. Vineyard is masculine both in Hebrew and Greek. Yet in both texts we find a succession of pronouns in the feminine for which there is no antecedent. Further "on that day a vineyard, etc.," does not read. Something has fallen out. Once this is recognised the presumption arises that the missing words contained an adequate connection between what preceded and what followed them and the idea that the song of the vineyard—if it be a song of the vineyard (which I doubt)—is out of place loses all probability. We need look back no further than xxvi. 1 to find an instance of a song being so connected with its context. I accordingly submit (1) that the original text presumably contained a suitable connection and (2) that this included a feminine word that served as an antecedent to the pronouns. Now what was that word? We require a feminine substantive denoting something that would naturally and properly be found in connection with a vineyard and could be watered. That points to נֶפֶן, a vine, and I notice

with pleasure that Duhm also saw that this word was required, though unfortunately he suggested that it should be substituted for כרם vineyard without having the slightest palaeographic probability for the conjecture. Once, however, we realise that the prophet is speaking of a vine, we begin to see other possible threads of connection in our materials. In verse 6 the words " Jacob shall take root, Israel shall blossom and bud ; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit " would be natural enough if the prophet had told a parable of a vine : cp. the explanation in Isaiah v. 7 of the parable of the vineyard in v. 1-6 : and if the Hebrew text of verse 8 with its reference to the sirocco is sound, that too would be appropriate.

At this point we must leave the earlier verses because a misplaced fragment relating to the vine is at present embodied in a later position. We must therefore disentangle it before proceeding with this matter.

A literal translation of the Hebrew of 9-11 showing the material genders is as follows :—

" 9. Therefore by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be atoned and this is all the fruit of taking away his sin : by his making all altar stones like smashed chalk stones : there shall not stand asherim and sun pillars. 10. For a fortified city (fem.) is alone, a pasture (masc.) deserted and forsaken like the wilderness (masc.) ; there a bull calf shall feed and there lie down and consume her [whose ?] branches. 11. When her boughs (masc.) are withered, they (fem. plural = the female persons or objects—Who ?) shall be broken. Women come (and) set her on fire ; for it is not a people (masc.) of understanding ; therefore his Maker will not have mercy on him and He that formed him will show him no favour."

It is impossible to suggest that the foregoing gives either satisfactory sense or satisfactory grammar. In verse 9 " all the fruit of taking away, etc.," is nonsense. In verse 10 the " for " is unintelligible. The only possible antecedent for " her " branches is the city. To say that a city likened to a pasture has branches, and that her boughs wither and are burnt by women, is to carry the process of mixing metaphors to a result that is surely impossible for a great literary artist. Nor can any historical justification be found for the idea that some city was to perish by the hand of foes who could fairly be likened to women. And who are the ladies or commodities that are to be broken ?

If we turn to the Greek we meet a text which, while full of difficulties, helps us considerably. At the beginning of

verse 9 it omits "therefore," which is likely enough to be a gloss. It then reads "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be atoned and this is his blessing when I take away his sin; when they make all the altar stones smashed like fine dust (or powdered lime) and there shall not remain their asherim, and their sun-pillars shall be cut down like a forest." Gray has seen that "like a forest" כיער corresponds to the first two words of the next verse. "Cut down" represents the third, so that we have

כיעריבצרו Original of Greek.
כיערבצורה Massoretic Hebrew.

The parallelism, vividness and force speak for the originality of the Greek text in this matter; and, as will be seen later, it yields an admirable sense in the next verse in place of the unintelligible Hebrew. Further, we get rid of the meaningless "for" and are relieved of the "fortified city" which nobody can identify satisfactorily, and the extraordinary mixture of metaphors by which its boughs (after it has been likened to a solitary pasture) are burnt by women. I therefore accept this. In the earlier part of the verse "All the fruit" is indefensible, as Gray has seen. But "his blessing" is no better. It suggests that ¹or some letter that resembled it was the last letter of the word before the translator. Blessing, *εὐλογία*, should naturally be ברכה or possibly בכורה. Neither of these helps us, so we must conclude that the Greek either had a corrupt text or was translating some unusual word or guessing. Gray has rightly seen that some meaning like "on this condition" is required. The word "all" is a frequent gloss and should probably be ignored. Following the *ductus literarum* of the Hebrew I conjecture some derivative of the root פדה, possibly פדיון "redemption money," "price" for פרי, and I think that perhaps the Greek found some corruption of this, perhaps as the result of damage to the archetype. The verse will then run, "By this (i.e. 'in this way,' 'on this condition') shall the iniquity of Jacob be atoned, and this shall be the price of taking away his sin by his making all altar stones like pounded chalk stones; the Asherim shall not stand and the sun-pillars shall be felled like a forest."

For the remainder of verse 10 and the beginning of verse 11 we have in the Greek μακρὰν τὸ κατοικοῦμενον ποίμνιον ἀνειμένον ἔσται, ὡς ποίμνιον καταλελιμμένον. Καὶ ἔσται πολὺν χρόνον εἰς βόσκημα, καὶ ἐκεῖ ἀναπαύσονται. 11. Καὶ μετὰ χρόνον οὐκ ἔσται ἐν αὐτῇ πᾶν γλωρὸν διὰ τὸ ξηρανθῆναι.

It is obvious that μακρὰν is unrepresented in our Hebrew and

that the following eight words when retranslated into Hebrew correspond thus to the Massoretic text :—

עדר נוח משלה כעדר נעזב Original of Greek.

בדר נוח משלה ונעזב במדבר Massoretic text.

It further appears that the translator misunderstood the נוח of his original, which in this context means lovely. So the Greek found a text which meant "Afar off shall the lovely flock be deserted like a flock that is forsaken; and it shall be at pasture a long time and there shall lie down. 11. And after a time there shall not be in her (Whom? flock and pasture are neuter in Greek) any green thing through its withering.

For the following clause Greek had a Hebrew somewhat like ours but slightly inferior. It is submitted that sense and grammar alike make it obvious that the feminine object which is to lack green and be burnt by women can have nothing to do with its present context. Whether we prefer the Massoretic or the Greek text for these words they refer clearly to some tree and have accidentally been misplaced in their present position. If they are removed, what remains gives an excellent sense and connection. The lovely flock that is to be left deserted far away is Judah in the Babylonian exile, and the reason assigned is intelligible, "for it is a people of no understanding, etc." Therefore it will not escape its punishment. We must next consider the relation of the rest of verse 10 in the two texts. וּשְׁמֵי יִרְבֵּץ and there shall it couch" was common to both. Possibly ἔσται εἰς βόσκημα, represents ירעה, but in that case a verb would have been a more obvious rendering. On the whole it is more probable that the Greek found a longer phrase. Damage to the Hebrew which also obliterated the "afar off" left a few letters which were deciphered as nearly as possible. The "calf" appears to have come in through a guess.

Lastly we have to consider the relations of the Hebrew and Greek in the passage relating to the tree. The word תִּשְׁבְּרָנָה, "they shall be broken," or "they shall break," is clearly a gloss of which "the women" are the subject. There is no other feminine plural to which it can relate. Presumably the glossator either held that branches must be broken off before they are burnt or else scribbled something in the margin about the fate of the women which was possibly misread and taken into the text.

We thus reach the conclusion that this portion of the prophecy ran as follows :—

"On this condition shall the iniquity of Jacob be atoned, And this shall be the price of taking away his sin : By his making all altar stones like pounded chalk stones ; The Asherim shall not stand, And the sun-pillars shall be felled like a forest. Afar off shall the lovely flock be deserted like a flock that is forsaken ; and it shall be at pasture for a long time and couch there ; for it is a people of no understanding ; therefore He that made them will not have compassion on them, etc."

Further, the words relating to the consuming of the boughs of the tree and their burning by women refer to the vine. Probably they should be connected with verse 8, which deals with the effect of the sirocco, though in their present form they could not follow it without emendation unless some intermediate words have been lost. But with a text in such a condition it is impossible to do more than to get an idea of the connection.

The study of the foregoing verses warrants certain conclusions which may have a bearing on the earlier part of the chapter. The Greek, while not infallible, had a text that was nearer to the archetype than our Hebrew. The latter has suffered badly in its later stages through careless copying, and apparently some words and letters that were quite legible in the Hebrew original of the Greek had been lost through some accident, such as blots, rubs or tears. Further there was one passage that was placed in quite the wrong context in the archetype. It will therefore be no cause for surprise if we find indications that similar influences have operated to destroy the earlier part of the chapter. Neither the Hebrew nor the Greek makes any satisfactory sense, but together they may carry us some way back along the road of corruption. I confess that my own impression is that the Greek is on the whole palaeographically earlier. Also I agree with Liebmann in the view that the very lack of connections in the translation excludes the theory of later editing which would presumably have been directed to making some intelligible sense.¹

Where so much is necessarily uncertain, one principle may be laid down as axiomatic. No solution can possibly be right that does violence to the true and unambiguous meaning of any phrase that is textually assured. The application of this canon relieves us of the task of considering current discussions of the text, which do violence to the initial phrase of 4b, **מִי יִתְּנֵי**. This introduces a wish and means "would that I were" (lit. "who will make me"). It is

¹ *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1904, p. 96.

palpably unsound to do injustice to its plain meaning for the sake of extracting a questionable sense from some phrase that is textually doubtful.

This expression is in fact the fulcrum of any sound exegesis of the passage, for the wish must necessarily throw light on what precedes. According as it is good or bad the transactions that led up to it will have been of a satisfactory or unsatisfactory nature. We must therefore begin by ascertaining its nature.

"Would that I were": we then have to choose between שמיר, "a thorn," and שמר עמיר, "a keeper of cut corn"—*custos stipulae* as the Latin renders it. Palaeographically it is probable that the latter phrase is due to dittography, and its sense is neither probable nor satisfactory. We therefore adopt "thorn." The next word is "a briar" in Hebrew and "in the field" in Greek. The asyndeton here tells against the Hebrew, nor does "would that I were a thorn, a briar" give a satisfactory meaning. But "would that I were a thorn in the field" seems probable and unexceptionable. Coming now to the apodosis, במלחמה corresponds to διὰ τὴν πολέμειαν ταύτην. Possibly the first three words represent בללחמה, which would result from the loss of a letter. In any case the Greek gives no sense and appears to be worse than the Hebrew. The next word אפשעה while textually certain is a ἀπαξ λεγόμενον. Philologically it means "step," but we cannot be certain what meaning usage had assigned to it. It is followed by בה, feminine, which obviously refers to the vine. A thorn could hardly be said to step on a vine. It would therefore appear that there is a secondary meaning, and that taken in conjunction with במלחמה the whole phrase conveys some idea like "I would wage war on her." The concluding word of the line, אציתנה was clearly in the archetype. We may keep it, accept the mixed metaphor and render "I would consume her," comparing Judges ix. 15.

The comparison of the Greek shows that the words יחד או are not original. Either they have come in through dittography of יהזק or else they are a corruption of a fragment of the first clause of verse 4 written in the margin and taken into the text at the wrong place.

We have now gained an approximate idea of the nature of the wish. On the view that appears most probable it means "Would that I were a thorn in a field! with war would I assail her; I would consume her." Whatever divergences there may be on points of detail it will hardly be disputed

that the wish is of an unfavourable character. And this is confirmed by the sequel, where, as we have seen, the lovely flock undergoes tribulations because it is a people of no understanding. Presumably therefore the preceding lines narrate the failure of the efforts to make a success of the vine. Consequently when in 3*a* we are called upon to make a choice between the Massoretic "continually I water her" and the Greek "In vain I water her" we shall incline to the latter. In 3*b*, 4*a* several facts stand out. The Massoretic עליה seems to be a corrupt dittograph of לילה. The Massoretic אין לי חמה, "Fury is not in me," makes no sense whatever, and the words אין לי are shown by the Greek to be the remnants of a longer phrase, parts of which had been obliterated. The balance and antithesis of the Greek "For . . . by night and by day . . . חמה" (leaving the intermediate words blank for the moment) stamp it as more original and show that חמה belongs to what precedes, not to what follows, while the initial כי gives the reason for the futility of the watering. Now חמה according to its vocalisation means wrath (which is obviously inappropriate here), wall or heat of the sun (more generally sun). The Greek adopts the second meaning, as it wrongly did in xxiv. 23, where again it has πεσεῖται, corresponding to the Hebrew בושׁה. The exact parallel between its renderings of the two passages enables us to see that here it read what it considered a part of the verb בושׁ. Some of the parts of that verb are however identical with the corresponding parts of יבשׁ, to be dry. Thus the Hebrew that appeared to the Greek translator to mean "a wall shall fall" could equally well have been rendered "the sun withers her," cp. Ezekiel xvii. 24, xix. 12, Isaiah xlii. 15. The Hebrew אצרנה then represents a desperate attempt to restore a text that had become partly illegible on the basis of the preceding נצרה.

Thus we reach the conclusion that the song originally told of a vine which was an allegorical presentation of Israel. The efforts to make it flourish successfully proved vain. They led to the wish that the speaker might be a thorn to wage war on this unsatisfactory plant. There is further reasoning with the people in which it is foretold that the vine will be withered by the sirocco and swept away and the people sent into exile for their sins. Yet ultimately there will be a restoration (vers. 12 f.) That seems to be the general sense of the chapter which was already in a fragmentary condition when copies of the archetype were made, and the Greek and Hebrew lines of transmission began to diverge.

It is a prediction of the Babylonian exile and the subsequent restoration written before the exile had taken place. But there is further cogent evidence of date. "All altar stones" in xxvii. 9 is in accord with pre-exilic practice. The Asherim and sun-images were unknown after the exile, but they were only too common in the pre-exilic period (see 2 Kings xxiii. 14, 2 Chron. xiv. 4 (5), xxxiv. 4, 7; cp. Isa. xvii. 8, Ezek. vi. 4, 6). Again the language used in Isaiah xxvii. 12 f. of the diaspora is in entire harmony with the representations of the other prophets of this period. On the other hand the view taken in this chapter and the situation presupposed would best suit the early years of Manasseh.

With this we obtain the clue to the interpretation of the whole section, for we see that the Babylonian exile and the subsequent restoration are prominent themes. They are not the only themes, for the prophet couples with them in his thought events that have not yet taken place, finding in the experiences of the people the first step towards an age in which death will be abolished.

In xxiv. 10 the Greek has "every city is waste." It knew nothing of the "city of confusion."

The text of xxv. 2-5 is in a desperate condition and I have been unable to frame any probable view as to the original. But one point stands out. In 3 the Greek read עני, poor, for עז, strong and some expression which it rendered "men who are wronged" in place of "terrible nations (or gentiles)," and to that extent it had a better text, for verse 4 in either the Greek or the Hebrew form gives God's protection of the poor in the time of trouble as the reason for the praise. This shows that it was the poor—i.e. the righteous Jews who were to praise him. In xxvi. 5 we may probably see an allusion to the future fall of Babylon, unless we take the expression "lofty city" as a collective.

Before passing to the other arguments used, attention should be drawn to the evidence of date furnished by the state of the text. Such archetypal lacunae and displacements as we have witnessed, followed by further corruption in the original of the Greek translation, argue a long period of transmission before the making of the Greek rendering.

It is now necessary to consider the argument from ideas. It has already been pointed out in another connection¹ how extraordinarily improbable it is that anybody who desired to introduce new thought should frame it in the old-world framework of an age long past. To do so and to understand

¹ See p. 173.

the passage as the critics do, would simply be to invite ridicule and failure. Just consider what is implied. At some post-exilic date—it matters not whether we say *circa* 400 or *circa* 180 B.C.—somebody anxious to revolutionise the current views of the future of man puts forward this prophecy as the genuine work of somebody writing *before* the exile. To this end he makes it foretell the destruction of death side by side with the exile, the restoration and the doom of Moab. Everybody knew that the other predictions had been realised and that death had not been destroyed. Could there be a more fatuous way of introducing the new doctrine than by putting forward a professedly pre-exilic prediction of events that had already occurred, but without the corollary?

It is further said that the teaching of Isaiah xxvi. 19 carries us towards the date of Daniel. As that book is still under discussion and no unanimity has been reached the contention is not very helpful: but why should not the Isaiah passage be the original of Daniel? It is nothing to the point to cite Job, for the problem of that book is entirely different. Its teaching refers not to Israelites only but to all mankind. Nor is it clear that the idea, as an idea, must be later than Ezekiel, for no man can say to-day who were included in the phrase "Thy dead." There seems no ground whatever for referring it to all Israelites or all righteous Israelites, for the prophet may have in mind a particular moment of the future. If it means only Israelites slain for God or slain on some particular occasion, as some have thought, the teaching does not touch the doctrines of any of the other passages to which Gray refers.

Again xxvii. 1 is not only in accordance with Isaiah's methods of expression (cp. Isa. xxx. 7); it postulates an historical situation totally unlike that of the post-exilic period. What probability is there then in the theory that it contains late Jewish thought? On its face it is a prediction of the destruction of Assyria, Babylonia and Egypt. As we know, the Assyrian monarchy was destroyed in 607 or 606 B.C., the Chaldean in 538 and the Egyptian in 525. Where then is the difficulty? Gray regards xxiv. 5 as referring to the nations. In my judgment "the land" in question is not the world but Judaea, and the passage simply refers to the exile. It is no better with the other contentions advanced. There is certainly universalism in xxv. 6 f., but so there is in Isaiah ii. 2 ff. Many of the points made are so lacking in cogency as to need no answer. Why for example should not a passage of Isaiah be the original source of the idea of a

great trumpet? Or why should not late writers have used the conception if it appealed to them? How can such facts prove anything as to the date of our prophecy? Why should not Isaiah teach that the Jews of his day were idolatrous and wicked and that as the result of the purification of the exile the post-exilic community would be righteous? Such passages as xxvi. 2 must be read in the light of xxvii. It was no more impossible for the author of Isaiah v. 1-7 than for the writer of xxvii.

Finally we come to the argument from style and language. With regard to general style it may well be that some of the peculiarities are due partly to the effect of the theme on the prophet's feelings—particularly if this oracle was his swan-song. For the man whose most important political work had been connected with the saving of Jerusalem, a detailed picture of the fate that was to befall his people at the hands of the Chaldeans must have been infinitely painful. For the rest it may be said that to prove post-exilic date it would be necessary to be able to point to at least one word or phrase that was textually certain and could not have been used before the exile. That Gray has entirely failed to do. His long discussion¹ contains not a single fact of any cogency. In view of this no detailed answer is necessary.

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 463-472.

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